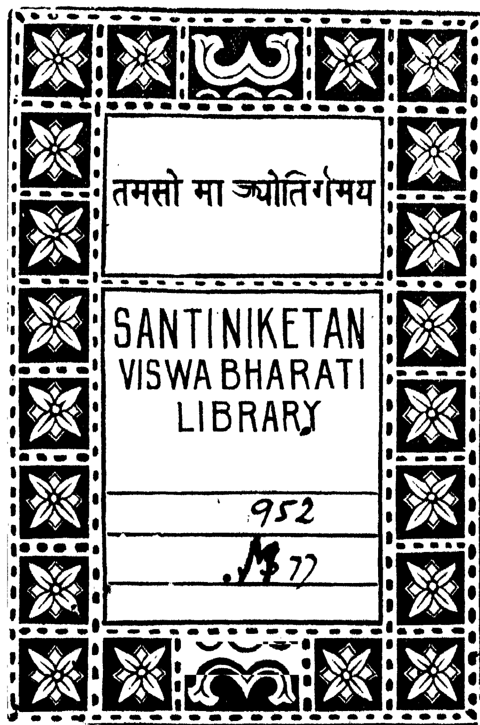

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THE RISING SUN

THE RISING SUN

JAPAN PAST AND PRESENT

D. N. MOOKHERJEA

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Dedicated

to

Mr. CHUBAY ITOH,

the live-wire Industrialist

and

the magnetic man,

as an humble

token of profound

respect and esteem.

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

By

Dr. Kalidas Nag, m.a. (Cal.),
D. Litt. (Paris)

In the Asiatic family of nations Japan is one of the smaller units in dimension. The smallness of her size brings into greater prominence the magnitude of the political, economic and cultural problems that she was called to solve not only on her own behalf but on that of other nations of Asia. The problems confronting Japan as well as her sister nations were primarily of a two-fold character: to organize, as quickly and effectively as possible, defensive measures against the devastating inroads of the Western Powers and, at the same time, to modernize the indigenous, political, economic and social structures. In some of the Asiatic countries we find the defensive activities to be so exacting as to cripple for the time being the creative functions.

Before the ominous march of the Occidental Powers, hardened by the conquests of the Industrial Revolution, most of the

Eastern nations fell prostrate, till we reached the fateful year 1864 when Commodore Perry tried to teach Japan a new lesson in International Relations by naval bombardment of her defenceless shores. That was the "zero hour" in the life of Asiatic nations and Japan was the first to take up the challenge in every sense.

The uncompromising spirit of independence manifested by that 'little island' fired the imagination of Hem Chandra Banerjee, one of our earliest patriotic poets. Inspite of linguistic barriers the glorious achievements of the Meiji Era reached the people of India and the family of Tagores which led the nation in cultural movements, welcomed Mr. Okakura in Bengal in the beginning of the twentieth century which opened with the momentous publication, "The Ideals of the East," composed mainly in the city of Calcutta.

The victory of Japan over Russia was epoch-making in more sense than one. We in India and specially in Bengal developed an entirely new outlook characterizing the "generation of 1905." Batch after batch of young Indians went to Japan for training

and the Indo-Japanese Association of Tokyo was founded by the great Marquis Okuma.

Since then, for over a quarter of a century India and Japan are collaborating in different fields. Why and how Japan managed to come out of her medievalism and assert herself as one of the great nations of the World while China and India lag so far behind are bound to rouse our spirit of questioning. Many Indians have tried to answer these questions in many ways. Mr. D. N. Mookherjea, the author of this handy volume has tried to answer some of the questions in a very lucid and suggestive manner.

We know him to be a businessman from his admirable survey of Japanese trade and industry. But he is a Bengali businessman and as such he betrays his pre-occupation to explain the material success of Japan with reference to non-material assets of the Japanese race. While the contemporary periodicals mainly of Western inspiration, are exaggerating the political factors in Japanese Government, Mr. Mookherjea tries to supply the necessary corrective by drawing our attention to the national psychology of

the Japanese people expressed through their home life and social relations, education and religion, art and literature.

He thus helps his readers to form their own opinion. They need not agree with his conclusions and they may not understand or justify the various political moves of the Japanese Government. But we hope that a careful perusal of Mr. Mookherjea's book will give all sensible readers plenty of food for thought and if his presentation provokes his countrymen to visit Japan to collect further information, then we are sure, the author's labours will be amply justified.

PREFACE

It was not with the pre-conceived idea of writing a book that I made a tour of Japan. I did not go there with a mission, just to make a hurried hop here and there, visiting some towering personalities, and following beaten tracks, to make most preposterous generalization of limited experiences. I did not go there to gather facts just to give a colouring of authenticity to mischievous distortions.

I had ample opportunities of coming in close contact with the Japanese people in various aspects of their life. The achievements of this great Asiatic power in trade, industry, social reorganization and politics within half a century, starting its career with all the handicaps of medieval feudalism and of Tsarist imperialism, appeared to me to be an object-lesson to us, Indians, in the course of our nation in making. This is the only apology I have to offer in publishing the book.

I have studied Japan in this point of view, analyzing the forces that are at work and not what they should have been; and if I have overlooked

any shortcomings in any phase of the Japanese life, and possibly they are as numerous as there are different ethics and different interptetations, it is only because I did not go to Japan either as a social reformer or as a political adviser. Japanese people can be left to look for themselves. To claim the privilege of uncalled-for guardianship is a nature more with the West than with the East.

My personal experiences have been supplemented by the study of writings by the eminent writers, from which I have received every meterial help in compiling the book. Acknowledgement of my deep gratitude is also due to the contributors and publishers of the various issues of 'The Round Table,' 'The Times', 'Asia-New York,' 'The Statesman,' 'Japan To-day and To-morrow', 'Present Day Japan,' 'Japan Times and Mail,' 'New Asia' and the 'Japan Year Book'.

Lastly, I must thank my friend Dr. A. K. Mookerji, Ph.D. (London) for his patience and fortitude in negotiating with the manuscript.

Dewali, October, 1939

"A new day has come
A new day ;
The buds are swelling,
Fresh leaves are bursting,
And from the brown clay
Green plants are sprouting.

The day of God is come ;
The day of God
That none expected
Is now at hand.

On that great day
The League of Nations
And the Anti-War Pact
Both lose their lustre ;
For only love's eternal truth
Can crowned be
With God's glory."

—KAGAWA.

THE LAND

The Rising Sun drives slowly his chequered charriot in the Eastern horizon, carried by seven brilliant steeds of seven different colours. The morning twilight lingers languidly on the fluttering lofty flag of the Rising Sun,—the proud banner of the land that greets it first through the golden vista of prolific pine-trees. The land is Japan : Japan the land of the Rising Sun.

The land, unmolested so far by any foreign invasion, is said to have been created by Gods and the Imperial family is traced in the legend as the direct descendants of the Sun-goddess, 'ever destined to rule the country for thousands of years without interruption.' The Sun and the Moon had got their direct descendants in India as well, but neither the Solar nor the Lunar dynasties have been able to keep up either their sovereignty or continuity, and evidently they were not as favoured by their celestial parents as the children dominating these fortunate islands.

A country of such antiquity has, however, no earlier history written. One has only to depend on hearsay and on the evidence available after this long lapse of time. The Japanese era commences with the accession of Emperor Jimmu, 661 years before Christ, but there is no doubt about the antiquity of their history. The accession of Emperor Jimmu marks simply the beginning of the era, but not the beginning of the history which dates back to distant ages. In respect of earlier history Japan is in no better position than India.

A study of the available Japanese history reveals that the Empire has come into being and expanded quite naturally and peacefully. The formation of the Empire was not by conquest and the sovereignty never passed to different hands. Even while the military prestige of the Emperor was at its lowest in Japanese history, nobody attempted the overthrow of the crown to make an Emperor of himself.

During the long history of twentysix centuries Japan has not been exempted from civil strife. The medieval age was a continual chain of civil struggles among

the warlords ever eager to extend their fiefs by the conquest of those of their neighbours. The Central Government lost control over them altogether, but their loyalty to the Imperial Household was so constant that since time immemorial revolutions have been unknown to the country. The ancient capital of the country, Kyoto, was called *Heiankyo* or capital of peace, for there was a period extending over three-hundred years during which there was no execution of criminals in the capital. This is very significant in that it proves the generosity of the Emperors and the peace-loving nature of the Japanese people.

But the study of ancient Japanese history is not our mission. We have come to see and understand the present Japan, on whom the staring eyes of the whole world have been fixed of late, Japan that has set the entire universe at naught by her intelligence, skill and realization of her economic and political ends. Japan has done all these miracles in a very short time, and how she could do it !

A glorious past history does not carry

a nation too far in the march of life; old tradition does not help much in the struggle for existence. Tradition, submerged in the false pride of what it had, takes a nation to live in the past, quite oblivious of the present, and unmindful of the future.

Japan has both glorious past and ancient traditions, but in spite of them she has worked wonders in the world. It is a significant fact that Japan, in self-preservation, with the way pioneered by the West, accomplished the tremendous change in half a generation, while Europe required three centuries to come out of medievalism into modernism. It was not the transformation preceded by the painful rise of a generation of earnest, indiscreet, fanatical, patriotic new thinkers, but the amazing speed of the change itself, was due to the mental vitality and physical energy of the people. There must be something in the nature, constitution, system and in the ways of life of the people which could make them achieve so much success in all the spheres of activity.

The land of Japan extends from north

to south, from the verdant tropical zone in which summer never dies to the frigid zone winter-bound for half the year, crossing through the temperate zone in full bloom all the year round. She is surrounded by seas and washed by both cold and warm currents. The climate is very mild the four seasons are very regular, and the seas, gulfs, and islands are full of beautiful scenery, and rich in birds, animals, trees and flowers of various kinds.

The natural scenery of Japan is formed by the mosaic combination of mountains, rivers and seas. Japan can also be said to be the land of hotsprings, which number over four thousand, many more than all the hot-springs in Europe put together.

The fact that Japan is surrounded by seas, has a deep significance for her culture. These seas did not isolate Japan from her neighbours even in days when water-traffic was not developed as at present, but they served as ideal means of defence against foreign invasion. The very seas which enabled Japan to import foreign culture also helped herself to gain her security. Japan has created her own

peculiar civilization partly, through her own national character and partly through the surroundings of beautiful nature around her. There exists a remarkable difference between the Oriental and Occidental cultures and Japan can claim that she possesses the very essence of Oriental culture.

Japan is a mountainous land, her greater portion being covered with mountains. The topography of Japan produces high mountains covered with never-melting snow in the hottest season, tablelands rich in ultra-violet rays, waterfalls and cataracts, rapids below steep rocks and ravines and lakes in the deep solitude of mountainous regions.

Most of the mountains are volcanic. The rivers are rapid, but if there is no rain for, say, ten days most of them lay bare their beds. The people are frequently subjected to earthquakes, while a sense of uneasiness, such as neither Indians nor Europeans ever experience, is always lurking in the innermost minds of the Japanese. Gales and floods annually leave terror with attendant miseries in their wake.

These external influences have strongly impressed the temperament of the people.

The Japanese like the Nature around them, are highly sensitive and qualified with the ability to see anything through. They are neither stolid nor phlegmatic.

Ethnologically, the people of Japan proper are said to be a mixture of such different races as Moguls, Malays and Polynesians, but owing to the effects of the climate and other natural features peculiar to the Islands of Japan, the mixing process went on so thoroughly for a long time, that there exists a quite distinctive people, different from the Chinese and other neighbouring peoples in character and temperament. The fall of the feudal system, the opening of Japan's doors to the world, the removal of the strong class barriers hitherto existing between the *Samurai* class and the classes of agriculture, industry and commerce, the importation of Western civilization and adaptation of progressiveness, promoted the regeneration of the people, with a noted increase in the population of the Island Empire.

According to 1934 census the total number of population was 67,230,000, and the density of the population was 175 per

square kilometre (11 persons per hectare), being next to that of Belgium and England. Although Japan ranks third in density of population, she may be said to be first in view of the proportion of arable land, because the Japanese Islands are full of mountains, the arable land being only 20 per cent of the total area.

The population of Japan proper now exceeds 70 millions. Full census records do not go very far back; but the total seems to have doubled by natural increase in about fifty years, and it is still increasing by over a million a year.

Sir Edward Grigg, M.P. writes in the Observer, 1938........"An island race, with natural resources inferior to England, the Japanese have had problems very like our own to solve in the face of far greater difficulties. We trebled our population in the nineteenth century and in that process launched upon that epic of industrial and commercial expansion, combined with annexation, emigration, and political development which has given us the British Empire of our own time. The Japanese islanders have been forced into expansion

by the same compelling needs. To a large extent they modelled themselves upon us."

"It is said that Japan might have secured all that the people needed by diplomatic means; but the proposals of the Lytton Commission, sent out by the League in 1932, hardly justify that view. What is certain is that from 1921 onwards she determined, at all sacrifice to make herself mistress of the Far East, and her military leaders have taken the bit between their teeth."

Japan was reposing in solitary slumbers till the middle of the nineteenth centuary confined in her self-imposed seclusion. She had no international relations and whenever any foreigner strived to establish such a relation, he was only turned out. But this tortoise policy could not last long. In 1853 Commodore Perry of the United States approached the shores of Japan with three "black monster ships" while at the same time a Russian battleship anchored in Japan waters. Perry proposed to Japan through the muzzles of cannons to have diplomatic relations with the United States. Japan wanted time and Perry left the shores

with the threat that he would come again to make her agree to his proposals.

This threat served to rouse Japan from her slumber of ages. She realized that her seclusion from the rest of the world has only proved suicidal for her. She hastened to build Forts, make battleships with the help of Dutch navigators and strived with grim determination to acquire the strength by dint of which the foreigners could show red eyes to the people in the land of the Sun-goddess.

And her determination brought her success. She considered Korea as the sharp end of a spear definitely directed towards her, and, for her safety and security she found it imperative to acquire the country. In 1894 she came forward to a test of strength with China and vanquished the formidable enemy. The Agreement of Shimonoseki made Korea an independent state under Japanese supervision and brought Formosa and another island under the sovereignty of Japan.

This was the first Sino-Japanese War and the ball that was set in motion that time is rolling ever since, though with

occasional interrupted velocity, and the two neighbouring great nations could not come to terms even up till now.

When Japan arose from her sleep of centuries she found her Island Empire too small for the population she had. The enormity of the population presented a serious problem to the economists of the land and they foresaw a state of chaos with the inevitable results of famine, pestilence and riot, Japan having little resources to feed all the people and to accommodate all the children of the soil.

Japan approached to solve the population problem in two different ways, and perhaps these are the only possible ways to meet the question. First, by immigration or sending people to other countries to work as labourers and secondly, by colonization or shifting people to newly-acquired territories, so long remaining unhabituated, undeveloped and uncivilized.

As regards immigration we find that Japanese labourers migrated in large numbers to America, Hawaii and to other islands of the Pacific during the early years of the twentieth century. The industrialists

of America, at first, employed quite a lot of Japanese labour finding it cheap with the result that unemployment of American citizens soon became acute and this gave rise to a very powerful movement against foreign labour and ultimately to the Anti-Asiatic Bill. The rigours of the Bill were principally applied against the Chinese and the Japanese labour and the Japanese immigrants were virtually driven out from America bags and baggages.

In 1911 the Brazilian Government announced that the vast forest tracts of the country would be made open to all nations, irrespective of caste and colour for development and settlement. This attracted many Japanese labourers to Brazil, who with strenuous efforts transformed the wild dreadful forest to healthy habitation and erected their small dwellings to live permanently there. But before long the Brazilian Government followed the footsteps of North America and enacted various measures to drive away the foreigners. So, Japan could not find a strip of land in the vast world to accommodate her excess population.

Colonization also did not meet with better results. With her first awakening she looked round the world, but found to her utter dismay that all the possible lands suitable for the purpose had already been occupied and divided amongst the white nations of the West. She could not find any land far away, and as such her attention was directed towards China, having a vast territory and comparatively less population.

The Japanese people are extremely conservative and generally do not like to go abroad to settle in foreign lands, because of the habit of seclusion fostered during the feudal age. When Korea came under Japan, many Japanese came to settle there, built houses and acquired extensive lands, but after a few years they dismantled their new homes and came back to Japan. From statistics covering over a long period it is found that the number of Japanese in Korea is not more than seven per cent, including the soldiers and Government officers living temporarily there. The attempt to colonize Korea miserably failed.

The authorities thought that the climate

of Korea was not suitable to the Japanese, being so different from Japan proper and that was why the people did not like the land. The weather of Formosa was very similar to that of Japan and it was considered that the Japanese would not play shy to settle in that island. But the statistics speak that after so many years' efforts the number of Japanese in Formosa could not go beyond 4. 75 per cent.

As an outcome of the Russo-Japanese War in 1904, southern part of the Sakhalin island came under Japan and in this island alone there have been many Japanese settlers owing to its proximity to the main lands. Japan tried to colonize the islands that came under her guardianship on the mandate of the League of Nations after the Treaty of Versailles, but the attempts did not meet with much success.

Baffled in the attempt of colonization extending over a period of forty years Japan turned her attention to the next remaining alternative of industrialization as a means to slove the population problem. But industrialization requires two things to be successful. First, raw material

and universal resources. Secondly, market for the manufactured articles. None of them Japan found easy to get. Japan tried her best to avoid international complications which would arise by an attack on China. She was tempted to lead a campaign to East Siberia, rich in minerals and Soa Bean, in collaboration with the United States, but was soon disappointed. So the sources of raw materials remained still to be explored for her. The markets also became gradually limited and constrained owing to the tariff walls raised by almost all the countries in the post-war times. Japan was left solely to an unequal and unequitable competition for her manufactured articles. These facts are important to understand Japan and her people in as much as they have constrained the social, economical and political activities of the Japanese nation.

Russo-Japanese War first brought Japan to the limelight. That was an era which witnessed the birth of a great King, Mutsuhito, now glorified posthumously as the Meiji (Enlightened Administration) Emperor, who had an influence

so dynamic that he transformed Japan into a new-born island almost overnight, as if with a magic wand. A thorough change was wrought out in Japan's political ethics, social politics and even in dress, food and the individual ways of living, and this is called the Meiji Restoration. Her complicated oriental sentiment was focussed on the materialistic Occident. Skilful Japan completed the Western picture on her eastern canvass with such perfect proportion, that there was no odd, ugly trace of an uncompromising brush, drawing unfit lines and leaving uncouth colours here and there. Thus, the grand Occidental and Oriental approachment reveals the particular character of Japan.

How it grew up into the present state is all that history will say, but one cannot overlook that the very constitution of the country played a great part in the speedy adaptation of her requirements. The national constitution of Japan is substantiated in the fact that the country is "reigned over and governed by a line of Emperors, sacred and

inviolable, unbroken for ages eternal". This is the Japanese political belief inherited from their ancestors; it is their conviction invariable for ages to come. This conviction is as sure as the conviction of the Sun shining over the Earth for ever. The nature of the constitution of the Japanese Empire is one and same through generations past and for eternity. To use a psychological metaphor, the Emperor is the Mind of the state and to use a philosophical term, the Emperor is the Subject of the state. As a body constituted of innumerable cells is a human being only when it embodies a human mind, so the millions of Japanese subjects constitute the Empire of Japan only when they are governed by the Emperor, who is believed to be substance of the Japanese nation just as the mind is the substance of man. The state of Japan, therefore, is a crystallization of the eternal love of the great family of the Japanese.

The Emperor Meiji could, therefore, find it possible to work out his schemes of reformation so easily and so promptly.

He had not to face the difficulties which the radical reformers in other lands had to encounter, resulting in utter disaster. It is now an interesting study to see how Japan has built her Western structure on the Eastern foundation. It is fascinating. What strikes us most is her individual, social and economical beauty,—the beauty of her culture and character. Nothing of her valour and politics did appeal to us. For the last few years, the more she is advancing to her political climax, the more of criticisms for or against her are pouring down in different quarters. Some of them are sentimental without any bearing on the actual facts, others are selfish, influenced by the bias of individual interests. But, every thought, every act of man is always open to criticisms and it always shows the good as well as the bad side of the shield. Much may be said on both sides. 'You can believe which you like according to your interpretation of the long history of mankind, your study of world's conditions and trends, your belief or disbelief in an evolutionary mind

or consciousness or, as some would say, Almighty God, which lives in our deepest instincts and controls the destinies of the human race as a whole.

Hegel, the great German Philosopher analysed the course of human history as a process which he called dialectic. At every stage two opposites are in conflict and in contrast. Each depends for its very existence on the other, each conditions the other, and in a sense attracts the other so that they clash. You cannot conceive good apart from evil or evil apart from good, or being apart from non-being. Out of this ever-lasting clash of opposites there is a continual series of new synthesis, a succession of new ideas which direct the course of history. The relation of the opposites ideally as rather like the love relations of the sexes, a harmony of opposites in which lay the secret of creation. The opposing forces of to-day give birth to the ideas of to-morrow, which in turn develop a new idealism in themselves out of which spring the ideas of the day after. This is philosophy of evolution.

Karl Marx, on the other hand, though adopted the Hegelian dialectic, his conception of history was a purely materialistic determinist one of ruthless war. For him man is conditioned by his own selfish passions. There is in him no God, no prompter, but it is possible by the study of history,—and all history is for Marx really economic history,—to say where man's passions lead him. They lead him inevitably to class war, to an orgy of destruction, out of which would emerge the new synthesis, a completely classless society. This is politics of revolution.

Whichever of these two ways you look at it, whether deep conflicts between nations and classes can be resolved without war, or revolution and wars are inevitable, there seems agreement between such different students of the philosophy of Hegel on the one hand and of the politics of Marx on the other, that the evolution of mankind is towards a unity, when war with the human race will disappear. So, war is to end war, as we so often hear now-a-days, a practical possibility, as distinct from a Utopian dream of doing so.

If you think of it you will realize that, to quote Mr. Arthur Moore, "given the world as it is to-day, the appalling jungle of our social life, the confusion of our currencies, the restrictions of the world's trade, the deep opposition of great vested instincts to any interference with that jungle, opposition to free trade, to universal currency, to the disappearance of the munitions and armaments trade, to the absence of necessity for vast armies and navies—you will realize that it is highly unlikely that the war will end without war." In short, if war is ever to be abolished, there will be a last war, there will be some war to end war. But politics is not for us.

One cannot, however, banish politics altogether from his life while living in the present age of complications. International relation means politics. The time has long passed when a man or a nation could live with his absolute individuality in a world of his own, confined in the bathtub of Diogenes, enjoying the free warmth of God's Sun, free from the shadows of an intruder, unmolested with the current waves of foreign oceans. Communications

with others have created complications and the frantic search for a common formula to live peacefully on has given rise to so many doctrines of Socialism, Communism, Bolshevism, Imperialism, if not Ismism.

There is no end of Isms in the present world of wonders. One has only to shed crocodile tears one fine morning for some supposed sufferer, and he will soon become the observed of all observers. It is easier to deal with those who have the capital of some sort of engagement and to make profit out of same, than to trade with those who have nothing to stand on. That is why the world to-day is concerned more with the problem of chronic under-feeding than of complete starvation and is more bent on increasing the number of Trade Unions than establishing Industries to provide for the starved. To the common soldiers in the struggle for existence, we have failed to give the ration of restraint and toleration, but are giving them the intoxicating drinks of rebel and strike.

Politics, though is inseparable from the present-day life, the general mass have very little to do with it. Their whole life

is spent on the petty matters of pound, shilling and pence, relieved occasionally, however, with an opium dose of religion. To them, independence is a misnomer, emancipation is a bluff. Every country has a group of people who are purely political and the mass only look to them for inspiration. It is just the same in imperialist as well as in democratic governments, in the East, as in the West.

The people of the Orient, in some way or other, are more of idealists and that is why they are idolators. Hero-worship, even in its worst form, is in their flesh and blood. In culture, these Eastern people, even in this twentieth century could not get rid of the medieval mysticism and for that reason whenever they meet a power extraordinary, either of religion, morality, wisdom, wealth or even dogmatism, they at once bow their head to him. They forget their self, disregard their individuality. If we remember well, Rousseau once said that democracy enjoys independence only for a day,—the day of exercising its franchise. But the fallacy becomes evident when democracy is found to sacrifice its all to

the altar of Hero-worship. This mentality is not confined to Eastern hemisphere only. Every country, as a matter of fact, feels this natural weakness and as such democracy has invariably helped dictatorship to grow up. Government of the people, by the people and for the people has thus become a perfect illusion created by so many contradictory phrases.

"The Asiatic Republic is a natural evolution from Oriental benevolent despotism."—writes Mr. J. W. Hall in his Eminent Asians. "The Republics of Turkey, China, or Persia apply Western terms and organization to the old Oriental principle of the despot embodying all authority, administrative, legislative, and judicial, without specialization. This is, however, done in harmony with the traditions and feelings of the people, now expressed more articulately than before through a representative assembly, copied so far as make-up is concerned from Western constitutions, but having nothing in common with them in function."

The Japanese form of Government is remarkably similar to that of England. In

both the Governments the Kings are the heads of the nations, are vested with supreme powers, and are above the law. As constitutional monarchs they accept the advice of their cabinets, though not obliged by the constitution to do so, have the right to dismiss the Government and to dissolve Parliament, in which the people's will is voiced by elected members. The same amount of freedom of press is enjoyed in both the countries and precisely the same reluctance to criticise the King exists. Thus, neither the Japanese nor the British system of Government is completely democratic nor is either of them totalitarian.

But, there is fundamental difference between the Occidental democracy of Great Britain, which arose out of necessity and the Oriental democracy of Japan which evolved out of inherent national spirit of the people. We do not find in England such a dynamic form of Hero-worship as we find in Japan. As in India, political tool of Japan was composed on class basis. But the most striking point of the fact is that the division of labour had not

developed into a caste system, nor had it brought about a class-hatred amongst the people.

The ancient Japanese society was composed of different clans, with their own family names, and every possible effort was exercised to avoid confusion of the clans. Only the King is above all clans and the Imperial family has no family name. It is because there has been no more than one single line of Emperors, and a single dynasty and it means that the Imperial family has been the head of all the clans from the very beginning of the country and not through conquest of other clans.

King to the Japanese people is above all material existence. They regard their Emperor as their father and Lord, as an equal to our God. This kind of esteem for the King is indeed a unique characteristic of the Japanese people. Proverbial devotion to King combined with Western democracy found an excellent harmony in this land of the Rising Sun. Behind this, there is their vigorous patriotism and their very keen sense of self-respect, which is so delicate that a least touch of humiliation might be a cause

for *Harakiri*, and this is considered as perfect vindication of their honour. In fine, add Hamlet to Napoleon and flavour with Tolstoy, and you will get the true Japanese character.

They say that short-sized people are always very clever, but what amount of cleverness could make these short-statured people of Japan an object of wonder to the whole world, we were eager to know. With all eagerness we landed in Japan in the middle of March, the beginning of spring in the land, and it appeared quite impressive. The barometer was reading near about 38 degrees, and we soon learnt that like the nature of the people, the temperature of the land is also silent and tolerant and does not warm up so quickly.

In natural beauty Japan has no parallel. Her seasonal attractions are examplary. Her Cherry Season, Chrysanthemum season, Maple season are familiar even to those who know nothing of Japan. All advanced civilized countries have a kind of Tourist organization to present the country and things to foreigners as things of beauty and objects to enjoy. They call it Industry.

complete, and soon empties itself in salubrious satisfaction of solemn sacrifice.

The people love the simple beauty of this flower, but still more they love to see it fall without remaining long on the tree as other flowers do. It is often likened to a *Samurai* falling on the battle-field after fighting gloriously, as Cherry flower blown down by air. The Japanese proverb runs—"*Hanawa Sakuragi Hitowa Bushi*"—of all men the *Samurai*, of all flowers the Cherry.

The Japanese are frank and open-hearted and are never obstinate. They place duty before self-interest. All these qualities are symbolized by the Cherry, and here is the spirit of Japan. Without knowing this, no one can truly understand Japanese character.

We have no Cherry in our country, and as such it is not possible to compare it with any flower of ours. Rather, it would be idle to compare the beauty of one with other, either in appearance of a man to man, or flower to flower. Nobody could dissect beauty for the sake of dissection.

But to describe the beauty of Cherry, Chrysanthemum or Maple is not our business.

The beauty that is hidden in the wide span of blue waters, in the resounding currents of playful rivers, in the eternal murmuring bubbles of the numerous springs, in the pinnacled pines piercing the sky, is indeed a thing of joy for ever in the islands of the Rising Sun. The beauty is manifested in the sweet, amiable and gentle manners of the Japanese people,—in their simple lives, in their hospitable homes. The beauty is betrayed in their Trade, Industry, Literature, Arts, and in every-day life of these imaginative folks. Let us enjoy the beauty, appreciate the spirit and admire the people.

THE PEOPLE

Admiration, however, cannot exist without appreciation, appreciation without understanding and understanding without opportunity. In the present condition of Japan, we had great doubts, whether that opportunity would be available. We had apprehensions that from these yellow people, maddened as they are with the intoxication of new achievements, we might get only a Royal edition of the code of treatment, which we, the black Indians, receive from the white races of the West more often than not.

Not many years back, Hindusthan was *Tenjuku* (Heaven) to the people of Nippon. They held in high estimation the land of Lord Buddha ; they folded their hands in respect on the very mention of it. We are speaking of a time when Japan did not allow Christianity to enter her soils, and not of modern Japan. Japan to-day, like other progressive nations, is trying to avoid the Godhead in her life, and as such it cannot be expected of her

that while she disregards the God, she will show any regard for a land, simply because it was the birth-place of a religious instructor in bygone days. And, we do not know, if the present-day India has anything left to claim that veneration.

The grandparents of present Japan looked with admiration the Buddhist Hindusthan,—the bright land of the enlightened people, who hoisted the silvery flag of knowledge, religion, and culture far and near,—the country which was the torch-bearer of civilization to the primitive world. Even to-day, they have not lost their regard for that Hindusthan; they still feel proud when their children come to India, just as a Mohamedan feels when one of his family makes a pilgrimage to Hedzaj. But India does not so much appeal to them as Hindusthan did.

It was an unfortunate day when Hindusthan was metamorphosed to India. Nobody knows who inflicted this unkindest cut by trying to rob the unfortunate, impoverished country of its only relics of past treasures,—the only insignia of bygone glories,—the name and name alone, that

remained as her only inheritance. Was it due to the incapability to pronounce a foreign tongue on the part of a horde of foreign invaders,—the Dutch, the Greek, the Pathans, the Moguls, the nameless nonentities of a nonsensical number of uneducated uncultured people, who came here to exclaim *veni vidi vici*; or was it a systematic attempt to make the vanquished people forget their own culture, their own tradition and their own name! Who can tell?

Those who can easily pronounce names of other countries, stiff enough to break one's jaw, it is hard to believe that they had altered the pronunciation of our names and places to be easier for their tongue. But the fact remains that our Baranashi has been squeezed down to Benares, Haridwar to Hardwar, Kalighat to Calcutta, Satadru to Sutlej, Bijoynagaram to Vizianagram, Bishakhapattan to Vizagaputtum and ultimately to Vizag.

It cannot be denied that our slave-mentality also worked largely behind the nefarious scheme. It may be, some of our worthy ancestors, blinded with the new

Western light, wanted to transform the country to a Western atmosphere overnight. That mentality is betrayed in the fact that we still name our children as "Baby" and "Dolly", we name our streets as "Park Circus" "Mandeville Garden" and "Sunny Park", we name our buildings as "Court" and "Mansion" and one wonders why Calcutta has not been called Calshire by this time.

Japan knew Hindusthan and knew not India. The misfortune which turned Hindusthan to India has also crushed the regard of the Japanese people to the dust of curiosity. Japan to-day has not so much of regard for India as she has curiosity for the land. And, that curiosity has saved the disregard from being transformed to hatred.

Japan too has taken much from the West, but she has not effaced herself as we have done. She has shaped the West in her own moulds, but has not melted herself to the moulds of the West. Japanese people have taken up the European dress for the sake of efficiency, and not for show. They did not show a bit of hesitation

in discarding their national dress when they found it unsuitable in working in the mills and offices with the long-skirt *Kimono*, like the flowing robes of a Roman Senator of old. Similarly, they do not cling to the vanity of the European dress when out of duty and as soon as they get home they wrap themselves up with their beloved *Kimono* in perfect comfort. The change of dress to the Japanese people is rather like the costumes of an actor to suit the part he may be playing.

Western dress could not influence their manners, their habit, their look and their temper so as to generate a superiority complex in them. Even with the trousers on, they sit folding their legs on the mats, not worrying about the ironing of the trousers. While in a temple or shrine, they discard the shoes outside and enter the temple barefooted, and do not stand outside to show more respect to the shoes than to the image of God inside. In a Japanese house one has to enter leaving the shoes outside and they do it without any idea of humiliation. And, that is

why you may get a shoe-horn if you search the coat-pockets of the Japanese people.

Women in Japan have not been slow in imitating the West. Rather, ultra-modernism has had more influence on them than on the menfolk. No doubt, they advance the excuse of utility and efficiency in its favour, and may be, there is some truth in it. Short-skirt may have its utility in mills and offices ; and we have seen girls taking to short-skirt in the office and changing it for *Kimono* while leaving after the day's work. Bobbed hair may have spared the Japanese women the tedious and complicated business of making up their hair in the fashion they did before, but still one cannot overlook the growing tendency amongst the ladies to be forward in the Western line. One cannot but feel concerned to see hovering over Japan the chequered head of the hydra-headed serpent which the keen eyes of Carlyle discovered in modern civilization. As it is to-day, the Japanese women have not lost their Oriental character, which is still evident in clear perspective in their courtesy, propriety, and in the earnestness

of their dealings. Nobody can say, what it will be ten years hence. Whether the effects of ultra-modernism will poison their sweet nature, or will not, future alone will reply. As in all other advanced countries, a very dismal darkness is accumulating in Japan just under the glowing lamp of modern civilization. We have no disire to peep into the darkness in search of sewers and drains and to prepare a drain-inspector's report.

One very great disadvantage in imitating others is that the shortcomings of the imitated, knowingly or unknowingly, get reflected upon the imitator. Japan could avoid that calamity as she never aped, but always adopted the West, shaping it to suit her own atmosphere. And, she does it very quickly so that she can go side by side with the West and never lags behind. To be in the front line in the march, Japan has had to effect many changes in her life, but there has been no change in her modesty, courtesy and hospitality. She respects herself and as such she can respect the feelings of others. In dealing with others the Japanese people are very careful, very alert, lest they might

offend others by any of their words or deeds. We do not know of any other nation in the world so much considerate of others' feelings. We will relate a small episode, and from small things, a man, and for the matter of that, a country can be better judged.

We were holidaying at Arashiyama, a beauty spot near Kyoto. A forceful stream made her way through the stiff mountains into the plains where the naked openness bewildered her, diffused her and she inundated the neighbouring lands not knowing whither to go. The Japanese take their family to such charming places to spend their holidays in picnic, play and frivolity.

The train was overcrowed with the holiday-makers. It was with great difficulties that we could get in a compartment, where to our great surprise we found some pre-occupiers, both ladies and gentlemen, vacating the seats to make room for us. Our protestations could not convince them and they were not satisfied until we took our seat. Engaged in conversation with our entertainers, we could hardly imagine that there were further surprise in store for us, and presently we found ourselves

confronted with a bonny little hand from the back benches holding a paperdish of chocolates. Not knowing what it was for, we looked back inquiringly and found a small girl of ten smiling sweetly as she regarded us. There were many girls of about same age around her, all school-girls, who came out for excursion. They greeted us with their characteristic smiles and nods and exclaimed :—"You are our guest, but unfortunately we meet you in a very inopportune situation. We may not have any further chance of treating our guest, and as such, we shall be pleased if you will please accept this very insignificant offering we have for you." Their sincerity overwhelmed us, and as we welcomed the gifts, insignificant to them, but very valuable to us, we wondered, whether this can be experienced anywhere else in the world.

Naturally we became inquisitive to know whether the Westerners receive the same treatment in Japan, and we soon learnt that the cordiality manifested by the girls in the train, was only the expression of a latent cultural link that the Oriental people have between them, untinted by any colour

of interested relationship, and unadulterated with any show of practised etiquette. It is expressed only where there is no bond of give and take, where there is no question of suspicion and untrust. What, therefore, they can give to the curiosity of the East, cannot possibly extend to the espionage of the West

In toleration, the Japanese have no equals. In private life, in social matters, in business and even in religion they are tolerant to the extreme.

Japan has principally two religions: Shintoism, the old cult, and Buddhism, which has the largest following. Recently there have been a number of Christians and a few Mohamedans too, but there is no occasion of the deafening drum of the Buddhists paralysing the prayers of the Mohamedans, and no instance of breaking the bones in an attempt to smash the drums.

The question of religious toleration does not arise in Europe, or in any other country, save India, as there are not too many religious sects in those lands. The Catholics and Protestants have managed

to tolerate each other as the religion is the same, but the treatment the out-numbered Jews are being meted out to, provides an interesting study in the columns of newspapers. So is the situation in the Near East, where the Mohamedans are predominating; though the Jews in Palestine are neither happier nor wiser than their brothers in other lands of the West.

India provides a particular problem of religion and the pictures of India's religious toleration are painted red in the pages of history. But religion could not be a preblem in Japan though she has as many as four religions in her fold. The people know religion to be a purely personal belief and they have not allowed personal matters to influence their social and political life.

We have seen Christians in Japan taking off their hats while passing a Buddhist temple or a Shinto shrine and the Buddhists uncovering their heads before a Christian church, and none of them was excommunicated. The toleration of others' religion has given a singular eminence to the Japanese character.

Simplicity is the keynote of life in Japan. A Japanese must not over-dress or over-act, he must not fuss or gush or obtrude himself on his environment, lest he may be thought selfish and wrong-headed, a boor and a disturber of the symmetry and just balance in human relationships. He must efface himself, render himself inconspicuous, blend imperceptibly into the harmony of life. This is the East and this is Japan.

The serious-looking man, when his moment comes, will be ready to show utter disregard of any consequences to himself. This is *Bushido* ; no bluster, pretence or conceit. Never despise a weak enemy and never fear a strong one. This is the East and this is Japan.

Japanese men act as if they disdained their women. Good form forbids the showing of any affection for the fair sex. The tenderest affection is lavished on other family members. They must not be a slave to woman or to sex. And if he is really some woman's slave, hungering for a glimpse of her, for heaven's sake he would not show it,—he will be thought

a horrible victim of his own selfish passions and desires, and lacking in manliness. He knows that at any time he might be called upon to tear out his heart or his bowels, to sacrifice and obliterate himself as he might choose his own method. This is the East, and this is Japan.

But above all, there is the love for Art which is a remarkable characteristic of the Japanese people, both men and women; and this is betrayed even in their more matter-of-fact lives in the business world. Everyone of them is a bit of a poet and much of an artist. They have an elegant taste and they love literature. There are many instances of a hard stuff like the general of an army composing poems in the camps or on the way to battle-fields. Drawing and painting is somewhat a hobby with them, acquired from very infancy. There is not a Japanese, who has not a camera with him and not a house in Japan, which does not possess picture albums. Even in their alphabets one can find out their æsthetic sense.

There is some peculiarity in the Japanese way of writing. Most of the people in the

world write from left to right. In Arabic, Persian and in Urdu one has to write from right to left. But the Japanese write more from right to left than from left to right, but mostly from up to down. They arrange lines downwards, not all of same longitude, which present a spectacle of the tiny branches of a Cherry-tree, stooped down with the burden of flowers.

Their characters themselves are so many pictures, and that they draw with brushes and not with nibs or pens. Of course, in business they have taken to the more efficient way of writing with modern implements, but the old style of drawing with brush still exists in their private and social life. They prepare a particular sort of ink from burnt rice and use a particular sort of thick absorbing paper to write on.

Invited by Japanese friends we had several occasions to sign our autograph, on such a paper, with such an ink and such a brush. The pictures we had drawn of our name in English and Bengali characters were no doubt an interesting work. We did not however, equip ourselves with photographed specimens

of those great masterpieces for the benefit of our readers. But, may be, they will be able to enjoy their beauty when they are chanced to be exposed in an Oriental Art Exhibition.

THE HOME LIFE

A structure of untinted wood, a roof of brown tiles, partitions of peculiar paper and fencing of fine bamboos,—these make a Japanese home. It is, of course, difficult to get a perfect impression of the actual thing from the mere mention of the ingredients, as it is not possible to form an idea of the beauty of an image from its unimpressive implements of straw, clay and paint. But, if one has to express it in too many words, he may at best play a jugglery of phraseology, but cannot present the real object just as it appears to the lurking eyes.

The beauty that is expressed in between the lines of a picture, could not so far be made full justice to in words and phrases, however rich the language, however powerful the writer might be. In expressing the homely beauty of a Japanese home with the help of words and phrases that have lost their spirit and import by repeated use, it should be a ridiculous job.

A procession of grandiloquent phraseology is, however, possible only when the object is rich in grandeur, pompous in appearance, and superfluous in importance. One can only appreciate a thing poor, having the only asset of simplicity and void of any pretence to importance, but cannot wax eloquent on its description. Poetry from time immemorial has been frugal in the fairy tales of rose, daffodils and tulips, but the little flower in the yonder nook is always born to blush unseen. The lotus has been wedded to the Sun simply for the sake of her grandeur, but no one explored the vast galaxy of stars to find out a consort for the humble hyacinth. Floods of tears have washed the cheeks of sentimental poets for several centuries in sympathy with the solemn sorrows of Seeta, but Urmilla remains neglected for ever in the mighty epic. The amazed spectators have been vociferous in eulogising the Taj and have lavished their resources in perpetuating its charm, but not more than six annas a month is provided for a lamp on the humble grave of Lutfa, the devoted consort of unfortunate Shiraj.

These simple houses in Japan have no grandeur, but charm they have. The unostentatious simplicity is their greatest asset. They have no pretention to extravagance either in or out of the rooms,—no varnish, no polish, no painting. The natural colour is kept intact everywhere, and how best that can be done with the help of mere carpenter's tools, these Japanese houses give ample testimony to.

It is not the town we are speaking of. There the sky-scrapers are piercing the sky in perfect American fashion, boasting of a score of stories. In dimension and decoration there is no dearth of grandeur in them. Their imposing exterior strikes with wonder, internal exuberance attracts the eyes. All the luxurious paraphernalia of the West have found place in them. In fact, it would have been difficult to realize when once in a room of those mansions, whether one is at Tokyo or at Washington, had there not been in all those settings the peculiar touch of Japanese simplicity.

But the average Japanese families do not, as a rule, live in town; so it will

be nothing short of blunder to judge the people on the standard of town life. Beyond the limits of the town area, Japan has so many beautiful spots, enchanting in natural scenery, free from the turmoils of the town and impregnated with a life full of peace. The people make their small cottages there and everyone of them is surrounded by a miniature landscape garden. There throbs their heart. The significant simplicity of these houses, cottages as they call them, provides a striking contrast to the studied extravagance of the town.

These huge buildings in the town are, however, of very recent origin. The idea of massive constructions was never thought of in Japan, before the age of reinforced concrete, for fear of earthquake. Now they are being made on iron structures and with concrete walls and floors. Still the percentage of such buildings is not more than ten. The rest is the beautiful combination of wood, tiles and paper. The office and shop buildings, hotels and *Riyokans*, temples and shrines and even some of the Imperial palaces are constructed with wood.

It is a significant fact that the foreign style buildings are really rare in Japan, except in the central section of the metropolis, and even there the small old style houses nestle in between huge modern buildings; and that most of Japan's daily life is lived in their little houses.

These facts have a symbolic meaning. However Westernized, or more precisely Americanized, the outward appearance of the present Japanese civilization and social life may be, the old Japanese principles lie immovable at the base. This shows that the Japanese are intrinsically conservatives and at the same time they are very progressive. Japanese people never discard the old, no matter how much they take in the new, and yet they do not allow confusion of the old and the new for long, but arrange them in unison in some way or other. They have the ability to simplify any complication that might arise. European countries completely discarded all their native cults when the cosmic faith of Christianity invaded them, and nobody to-day knows

if they had any religious cult before the advent of Christianity. But, in Japan, the native cult of Shintoism was never forsaken with the introduction of Buddhism, even when an Emperor himself declared his faithfulness to the principles of Buddhism. The native cult still has such a powerful hold on the people that it has often played the role of a propelling force in spiritual movements among them.

The Japanese rooms have remarkably low ceiling and it looks rather awkward for a man of average height of five feet six inches to be standing in such a room. So, "please sit down on the mat" is a very commonplace greeting among the Japanese when they meet and enter into conversation.

The sitting on the mat on folded legs is a habit with the Eastern people. From Suez to Pacific this habit presists. Perhaps the ancestors of every race throughout the world have similarly lived or lain on the ground in some form or other. But the people of the West to-day do not keep even a trace of the habit of their ancestors. They have entirely modernised their ways of

living with the advance of civilization. Only the people of the East have kept up the traditional mode of living, and that in the most accomplished form, retaining the fundamental nature of the primitive usage.

The ways of Japanese home life go with their habit of sitting on mats. The cultural and social life of the Japanese is to a great extent moulded by this habit, and through this habit, their fine and applied arts have developed a unique style of her own. Their ways of thinking and expressing thoughts have been decisively affected by it. The Japanese way of suppressing the feeling and finally bursting out on occasion may be taken as a result of this habit. In other words, the Japanese are slow to get up from their seat on the mats, but once they stand up, they do it with resolution.

The characteristic of the Japanese cultural life are to be found in the introduction of new things without sacrificing the old. Time was, of course, needed before the Indian cult or Chinese culture could become fully adopted and assimilated into the native life of Japan, and it may be too choleric to apply the term discordance

to the present condition of Japanese cultural life. Most of the public buildings in Japan are Western in style, the working and ceremonial clothes are also Western, and Western ways of living are gradually creeping from the public into the private life of the people. The younger generations are fond of Western clothes and meals ; they know little of the Japanese classic, but are more conversant with the works of Continental writers and American movie actors ; they are lovers of modern sports and dancing and one wonders if the old customs and usages of Japan are in danger of being entirely discarded.

But, being aware of the rapid Westernization, there have occurred movements for a renaissance of old ways. In towns, rarely a male Japanese is seen in his *Kimono* and *Geta*, as in the provinces and smaller towns. Practically every Japanese is dressed in foreign or Western clothes. They are not the flash, and swanky fashions of Fifth Avenue or Piccadilly, but sober in appearance, sombre of colour, and of the plainest and commonest cut. For plain and inconspicuous dress mark the Japanese male :

Japanese cutters and tailors are nothing if not Catholic or orthodox. Among the soberly and sombrely clad men the colourful dresses of the women stand out in even greater contrast and to better advantage, for they are trustees of all that is pleasing and lovely in colour and form, in demeanour and character.

A wall of paper sounds incredible, but in fact they paste paper on wooden frames to make partitions of their houses, though the quality of the paper is different from those that are used for writing. But the paper is neither like glass nor like wooden planks ; they are papers, pure and simple. In spring, summer, autumn and winter these papers are changed to fit the taste of the season.

A house of cards, they say, is the most unstable structure to live in, but these Japanese cottages are little better than that. Still they have no fear from thieves and burglars and one wonders why ! The reply our pertinent inquiries could elicit from our Japanese friends was to mean that the simple and unostentatious life of the Japanese people has paralysed theft

and burglary in the country. Not that the Japanese have all become Messiah by the turn of some magic wand, but the fact is that these cottages offer no temptation to the burglars, whatever may be the financial position of their masters. So, if there is not the crude criminology of pocketing other's property, it is not so much due to the absence of inclination, as for the dearth of materials to rob of.

The Japanese ladies have no ornaments worth the name. A moderate dozen of bangles on the hand, a necklace round the neck, a pair of ear-tops piercing the ears, a Japanese girl has not entangled herself in every limb with these coveted chains. The most you can find is an engagement ring which is however a quite recent introduction. They have not dumped gold static on their body. They have not allowed it to sink unproductive into the abyss of personal vanity. They have not learnt to rejoice on the barren bonny beauty of hoarded money, either decorating the self or gathering moss in the dismal pit. The women of the land of commerce and industry have not

the propensity to have money lying idle and unproductive as they have not the habit of idling away their time. They employ their hard-earned savings in banks, in shares of mills and factories. And, it is for the unflinching support the industry receives from the whole nation, that it can find its boilers smoking day and night and not supplementing the brisk business of scrap materials in a year or two.

When ornaments there are none, and money invested in banks and shares, nothing is left for the thieves and burglars to seek for in a Japanese house. Valuable utensils the Japanese have no use of. No silver, no E.P.N.S. Porcelain and articles of lacquered wood are in general use and they are nice in look as well as cheap in value. As to durability, they can be bequeathed by a will and testament to the successors to be in sole undisputed possession of, for several generations. The dress they wear is not so much costly as it is imposing and is not embroidered with gold or silver threads, to compare with the Indian Benarasi Sarees. The *obi* alone sometimes costs more than three figures, but to burgle a

rooms are constructed in conformity with the dimensions of the mats; six-matted room, eight-matted room and so on. A platform is made about three feet above the ground level and the mats are fixed on that platform. On these mats the Japanese place some cotton cushions and sit folding their legs, though the poorer class use straw cushions too. There are no sofa, no couch, no suite, no bedstead. They have a small lacquered table, not more than a foot high, which they place in the centre of the room at dinner time, and remove to the lumber as soon as dining is finished. They spread and prepare their bed on the floor and the bed is folded and hidden in a wall-almirah, a component portion of the room, but absolutely unnoticeable until the sliding doors are pushed open. Thus, during daytime one cannot find any trace of beddings in their room and wonders if the Japanese go absolutely without the luxury of a bed.

In one part of the room there is a raised alcove, a few inches higher than the floor level, which is called *Tokonoma*,

or the place of honour. This alcove is never used by the Japanese people for any other purpose than placing flower baskets, hanging one or two simple pictures along with a sheet of thick paper, with a few lines of some well-known verse written on. These decorations are changed in every season to conform with the spirit of the season. A guest is to sit towards the *Tokonoma* whereas the host sits facing it, but had it been in England it could better be utilized as a family stage for performing after-dinner charades or in India for delivering religious talks.

Ikebana or flower arrangement is indispensable in Japanese homes. The arrangement forms the centre of attention in the Japanese room, which is kept scrupulously clean and which is free from unnecessary furnitures and decorations. *Ikebana* is an art by itself and much attention is paid, not only to the flower used, but also in the selection of the flowers and the scroll hanging on the wall behind.

The Japanese are probably the only

people in the world who found and appreciated the beauty of the grain in wood. When a Japanese builds his house, he selects pillars and ceiling boards with the best and most beautiful grain. He will have in mind what sort of a ceiling he wants in the guest room. He will examine many, many boards to find one which has the exact style of grain he seeks. Then the hardest task commences as he has to find a certain number of boards with identical grain in order to make the entire ceiling of the room. Sometimes it is extremely difficult to obtain a sufficient number of boards with similar grain markings. The hardness of wood of course counts, but for artistic value the grain is important. It is notable that many artistic designs for Japanese silks and other things are obtained from wood grains. According to the species of wood the grain differs. Some run like stream of water, some like reeds waving in the autumn wind, some like rocks on the seashore. *Masame* or the straight grains of wood fix the standard by which woods are valued in Japan and they are

also the measure by which a good house is appreciated.

Perhaps the most important article of furniture used in a Japanese home is the folding screen. It has a special place in every important event of a Japanese life from birth to death. At births and marriages it is the standard ceremonial decoration, and it is there at death too, altogether placed upside down by the death-bed as a sign of mourning. When receiving visitors one often displays one's best folding screen in the reception room and a low screen may be placed at the head of one's bed at night. This low variety is usually known as *Makura Byobu* or pillow-screen. There is another kind which does not fold, known as *Tsuitate*. It is placed at the entrance of a house or a room to screen the interior from the outside.

The Japanese have many special dishes, as most of the people in the world have, but the most popular are the *Oden* and the *Sukiyaki*. Though available in all seasons, steaming-hot, savoury *Oden* attains the height of its popularity amongst Japanese gourmets on cold winter nights. *Oden* is a generic name covering dozens of different

kinds of food cooked together in a large cauldron of boiling soy sauce flavoured with chicken soup and dried bonito shavings. This traditional food is both extremely palatable and inexpensive, and this is, perhaps, the greatest attraction for Japanese epicureans and will be sufficient to enable the time-honoured dish to hold its ground for many years to come against the increasing influx of Western varieties of victuals.

Sukiyaki is notable for the very cordial and friendly atmosphere it creates. A burning oven is placed on the table and the consumers sit round it. Different kinds of vegetables, fish and meat, beef preferred, are placed on the pan to be boiled with chicken soup or *sake* and the assemblage help themselves with the stuff in the small bowls they have ready in their hands. This creates an atmosphere of cordiality and close relation between them, and this relationship is considered very valuable by the Japanese.

It is the essence of the customs and manners of the Japanese people to serve tea to all guests in their homes. This is a very simple affair ; a beverage of green tea without milk or sugar. The manner and

etiquette of serving ceremonial tea are highly complicated. This traditional ritual is called *cha-no-yu* or the tea ceremony. A detailed description of all these formalities in their proper order would be tedious, and no less perplexing, but when performed by experienced persons, the whole procedure is interesting and pleasant to witness, as all ceremonies generally are, each step being smooth and graceful. Fortunately, this tea ceremony is being set aside from the modern life of the present generation with the exception of its old formality which sets forth a set of etiquettes. It is even considered as a retrogressive element against Japan's progressive life.

In every house, particularly in a Shinto or a Buddhist family, there is a place of worship and the food, when prepared, is taken there to be dedicated to the God. The Christians also pray on the dinner table before taking the food, unlike the Christians in other lands.

While on the subject of food, let us hasten to assure our readers that there is little chance of once's mouth being watered, or appetite stimulised on the reading of

a Japanese menu. It is a very simple fare and has neither the taste of a' Moghul *table-dêhote*, nor the flavour of an Italian *al-a-carte*. The Japanese take rice three times a day, prepared in a quite hygienic process without discarding the water after the rice is boiled. Those who are accustomed to take fine table rice would gather the experience of swallowing while still alive, the offerings of the Indian Hindus to their departed souls. The other dishes are neither so much appetizing. A clear soup, and that will not appeal to those who are accustomed to potage or creme. The boiled or unboiled vegetables and smoked, dried or raw fish will have no taste for those habituated to curry and grill. But still these are the favourite dishes of the Japanese, which they take with their wellknown sauce. The dishes have taste of their own and we should say, it is pleasing, though there are people who may be intolerably fastidious in regard to the taste of their food.

Milk, butter and cheese, the Japanese have very little use of. Seldom they take sweet, and when they do it, it is just to make an occasional change in the regular

item of dishes. They were discriminating in the selection of meat before, but they have broken up all the barriers now, though there are still such orthodox olds, who would not allow the younger generation to prepare pig or beef in their own house. But, though these favourite meat dishes are no longer proscribed by the laws of tradition, their actual use is only rare.

Sashimi, or raw fish requires some explanation, lest any misunderstanding should arise that the Japanese are in the habit of taking frogs and cockroaches as the Chinese do.

China is outspokenly termed the hotbed of abnormal epicureanism, where dishes of the most curious nature and taste are served. Shiono province in Japan, the largest in area but surrounded by mountains and as such detached from outside civilization, may be mentioned as the head-quarters for dishes of an outlandish kind. The natives of this province used to enjoy, and some of them do still enjoy it is said, eating locusts, chrysalises, snakes and other things that would make timid souls almost swoon. According to popular belief, the cooking of these

unusual materials is highly developed in that province.

The characteristic of Japanese cooking, we should remember, must be discussed with the basic fact always in mind that in view of the geographical, climatic and other conditions, the food-stuffs that best eaten raw are produced abundantly in Japan. These conditions have determined the dietetics of all nations in all countries and Japan cannot possibly be an exception. Looking at the chain of islands stretching from north to south, even a casual observer can see for himself how the Japanese must have prized and lived on sea food ever since their remotest forebears came by a fishing rod.

Japan has been favoured with a fair distribution of fresh edibles. As in common practice everywhere, Japanese grain food-stuffs are preserved dry, while the principal materials for the Japanese sidedishes are fish, shellfish and seaweed. The best part of the Japanese cuisine lies in its emphasizing the natural taste. There is an old saying to the effect that in the place where a foodstuff is produced there is no cuisine.

This means that when materials are fresh, it is better not to attempt any artificial seasoning, or at most to season them in the simplest manner so as not to destroy their natural flavour.

In the European style of cooking, in which the animal meat, unfit for eating raw, constitutes the chief material, cooking by seasoning has necessarily developed, though it is true that vegetables that can be taken raw are so consumed whenever possible. The reason that the Chinese dishes are regarded as the most tasty in the world is traced to the fact that the materials used in Chinese cooking are practically all dried stuffs, which needs must depend upon skill of seasoning.

The Meiji Restoration uprooted everything and the cuisinerie was no exception; it became simply chaotic. The lack of nourishment had become a public issue and with the cuisinerie wandering about in a blind alley, the influence of the European and Chinese cooking had been making itself felt in a great measure. The Japanese food in ancient times consisted chiefly of grain and vegetables, with fish and other marine products. Meat was consumed as a special dish

by a very small number of people. The absence of meat from the Japanese dinner table dates from the time Buddhism began wielding its influence, and many people are of opinion that the healthy growth of the Japanese physique has been very seriously affected by the religious abstention from meat diet.

The new Japanese cuisinerie is an attempt to make the *Katsu* method or the method of bringing out the best natural taste of the food with as little artificial means as possible, the principal feature as in the past, developing it by adopting from foreign cooking what is best suited to the Japanese taste. To make the most of the foodstuffs provided by Nature is the way man should follow, they state, and they point to the fact that the slow progress of pasturage in Japan, in spite of all possible encouragement given, is because the Japanese do not necessarily need meat as a foodstuff. Japan really, has no rival as the greatest consumer and purveyor of sea-foods in the world.

You step in a Japanese house and you are sure to be welcomed with utmost

courtesy and treated with a cup of green tea and a plate of rice-cakes. At table, the housewife is near by you with a lacquered jar of hot rice and passing the dishes on to you. You are kept well engaged in piquant conversations. The Japanese are accustomed to hot dishes, sometimes hot enough to tire one's tongue. They take hot bath and that just before going to bed, and as hot as 110 degrees Fahrenheit. *Hibachi* or brazier is another important article in a Japanese home. They feel at ease when they sit on the mats and warm themselves at a *hibachi*, generally made of porcelain, on a winter-day. This sort of brazier is still in vogue in the villages of Bengal, where the old people still relish this primitive heater, in which they burn rice-husks in earthen pots, whereas in Japan they burn charcoal.

The Japanese have many formalities to observe, not only on the dinner table, but in all phases of their life as well. Extremely sentimental as they are, they very easily take offence if the formality is in any way impaired. While dining in a Japanese house you should not refuse the hostess

offering you rice, nor you should leave any remnant in your bowl, as it gives an impression that you did not like the stuff and this means a disgrace to the host. You can please the host best by asking for further supply of rice, which will be much appreciated. This very delicate sentiment of pleasing the guest with sumptuous food, which he is expected to enjoy to his heart's content, is peculiar to the East. And this is Japan.

The home life of Japan, and many of her customs bore striking resemblance to those of India, particularly of Bengal. We take for instance the most important of social functions—marriage. Thirty years back, fathers in Japan, like their unfortunate brothers in Bengal, faced quite a calamity when their daughters reached marriageable age. The wedding ceremony and the varied colourful customary programmes before and after it, were a combination of a display demanded by convention and a token of the parent's love for their daughters. The family bank account steadily grew leaner. A father made a rough estimate of the expenses,

but a mother was particular about the details, and the mother's calculation always proved correct.

The arrival of a bride's trousseau was a show in itself. Anything that may be required by the girl to run her house, from pin to piano, was slowly carried in on litters by men specially dressed for the occasion. There followed a lovely list of feasts at different times for different kinds of guests, the closest relatives being entertained on the first day, while the servants and maids on the last day of the full week's festival. There was a popular saying in Japan—"A man having three daughters is sure to go bankrupt". In Bengal, one daughter, however, is sufficient for the purpose.

A girl of olden days was called "Flower bride" at the moment when she was taking part in the greatest 'show' of her life. "There she sat before numerous people, her eyes cast down beneath her heavy and lavishly trinketed coiffure, a hard, shining *obi* bound so tight over her breast that her heart's beating was almost stopped. After hours of the ordeal, she

would perhaps be hungry, and thirsty, but she must not forget that she was from a respectable family. She would sit still like a doll, her eyes turning here and there on the *tatami* floor before her. But the following day, the human flower is transplanted to a thorny garden where she is at the mercy of the inquisitiveness and, may be, ill-temper of her mother-in-law, and the blushing flower bride of yesternight would become a withered blossom to-morrow morning." How similar to the brides of Bengal !

There was, of course, a man called the go-between or popularly characterized as a 'bridge-builder' who would skip back and forth between the two families, a veteran, who finds match-making profitable, just as the *Ghataks* of Bengal. The bride-to-be would see the bridegroom's face for the first time after the wedding ceremony when the two were left alone.

Pictures of the man and women in question, in most cases super-retouched, were exchanged and then came the *Miai*— or "a meeting with a view to marriage," to quote a Japanese-English dictionary,

just as we have *Pucca Dekha* in Bengal and *Sagai* in the up-countries. But, unlike in India, "the prospective mates have interviews, may be at a restaurant, a theatre, a railway station, a park or even through the big round monkey cage at a zoo, where a youth and a maiden too dizzy to see the red faced funny animals, glance furtively at each other from opposite sides of the cage, offering great possibilities to a cartoonist if he is chanced to be nearby."

To-day, the Japanese ideas about marriage are in a transitional period and much of the once elaborate wedding programme and its expenses has been curtailed. No processions are to be seen now, except among families still refusing to emerge from the hard shell of tradition. Even the ceremony and dinners are gradually losing their original features. The old idea—"what people will say" is now too weak to frighten the liberalism of the thinking public, partly due to the marked change in the mode of life, and partly to the hard times. The younger generation of to-day thinks more

seriously of married life than of wedding ceremony. The go-between and the *miai* are slowly receding back and marriages through matrimonial agencies, through newspaper advertisements and through the desire of the parties concerned are becoming the order of the day. Free marriages tend to increase, with the firm realization among young people and it would appear that Nippon's historical family system is gradually collapsing and the individualism of the West is taking its place. But the family system continues to exist though a woman's position is undergoing subtle but definite changes. The "grimalkin" is not so big a problem to girls of to-day as it was to their sisters in the conservative period. Marriage in Japan may have lost to-day the colourfulness and grandeur of yesterday, but it has taken the first step toward a well-prepared course in modern house-making.

The similarity between the Japanese and the Bengalees, is rather astounding. Not merely in the ordinary mode of living, in sentiment, superstition, tradition, culture, in the ways of life, and in mental propensities,

the likeness between the two nations is so evident that we often wondered whether the ancestors of the Japanese people came from Bengal! So much of common features cannot be dismissed as mere accident. We are not competent enough to go into the root of this momentous research, as we admit our incapability for the great task. An enthusiast anthropologist, we are sure, will find in it a subject of devoted deliberations and taking this hint he may, one day, leave something for the posterity to be proud of.

This is the way which led to all the worthy discoveries of the world. And, what are discoveries but some suppositions, some ideas, some hints worked out diligently and devotedly! Thus, Mohenjodaro and Harappa provided unmistakable proof of ancient Indian civilization. Angkor-vat testified to the spread of old Brahmanical culture in distant Indo-China and Cambodia; the original homes of the Aryans of India have been located to Central Asia. Some intelligent expert working on the hint we have given, may find it possible to establish a blood-relationship between the Bengalees and the Japanese.

It may not be difficult for him to prove that the worthy sons of Bengal carried the Light of Asia to the lands of the Rising Sun during the palmy days of Buddhism; they drove the aborigines of the land out to the dismal caves of remote mountaineous seclusion, where they still maintain their unimpaired, unsophisticated existence looking fervently with admiration and wonder to the snow-clad Fujiyama. May it be possible that the wonderful annals of this new discovery will one day surprise the whole world! No one, perhaps, will remember that day this unfortunate writer, who in the drowsy stillness of a monsoon night in 1939 is giving the subject of such an epoch-making discovery. No one, perhaps, will even acknowledge that day the tremendous debt to him. On that fateful day the writer, but more probably some future claimant to this worthy heritage, may have to call his readers for evidence. Let the summons be served here and now.

MAN AND WOMAN

Even if the chances of establishing a blood-relationship between Bengal and Japan are destined to a distant date, there is no denying of the fact that the man and woman in Japan are not much different from those in Bengal, though geographically the two countries are so many miles apart.

The man can be divided into five classes : The capital class : the big enterprise operators and those who live on profits from money interest ; the salaried class : men living on wages, writers, and intellectuals ; the small and medium-scale men in commerce and industry : the small business operators ; the labour class : factory labourers and the miscellaneous class. Women can also be grossly divided into these categories. As the salaried class comprise a large number of the Japanese population, let us look to these men on the street to understand their life.

Japan is rapidly growing to be a land of salaried folk. Most young men and women, at least, think of nothing else than

landing a salary, however small to begin with, first thing upon finishing college, just the same as in Bengal. Thousands apply for vacancies, year after year, in the eminent houses of Commerce or Banks, but a few are chosen. Some turn to foreign firms for shelter. There they learn, sooner or later, that they 'do not belong.' The employees are so constantly on the sack list that a sense of insecurity weighs threateningly on an inexperienced mind. Bengal reflected here as well. Japan of the future seems likely to become more truly the land of the salaried folk, than the 'land of shop-keepers' was the description of England before the last Great War. Private enterprise may soon become a thing of the past in Japan.

Mr. Salaried-man in Japan draws a salary of anything between Yen 50 and 150 per month. He is not a misfit and does rather well. He is neither a success nor a failure. He leaves his home for work early in the morning, except Sunday, and works till his work is finished, no matter if he has to stay longer in the office than the closing hours. Another twenty years at the grind

may or may not find him in a private executive's office. He lacks pull from above. He knows he has no other stepping stone to a seat of influence and wealth than his will to work, his punctuality and his well-regulated habits. At the time of his retirement, which he secretly fixes for his fiftyfifth year, the firm will most probably take note of his past services in terms of a gold wine-cup and a cheque for a decent amount. He may be just a nobody, but it is not so much discomfort to him. Here it differs from Bengal.

At fifty or fiftyfive you could take him to be much younger, but for a certain heaviness of frame. He is happy and jovial. He may be enjoying some lingering dinner party—you can till it by the soft glow on his cheeks. He has never hustled or hurried feverishly, working himself into shreds and frazzles and nervous wrecks.

The life of the capital class is almost all the same when they retire, they leave the conduct of business and industry in the hands of sturdy grown-up sons. Father will assist with counsel and advice, pull some string now and again and devote

himself to poetry or art, to gardens and dwarf trees and to communal and patriotic organizations, and last but not the least to ceremonial tea. Youth does the work.

The common man is not so different from those of his type in any part of the world. He swallows his breakfast down at a gulp and makes for his place of work at eight sharp. There are his pretty wife and adorable children to reckon with in any all-round appraisal of his life. The former is assuredly a valuable asset and ally, may be a graduate of a well-known woman's college. She in frequent conferences with her husband, has sought to run her home as economically as possible. She affects foreign dress like most women of her age and up-bringing now a days. The trouble is, she loves nice silk *Kimono* as well. Now, the *Kimono*, cute though it may appear to foreigners, and its accessories are not as cheap as the foreigners imagine. And they are as sensitive to changing seasons as birds of passage. These considerations often cause the man to pause over the dress allowance in the budget until the grief of his wife is dispelled by the yearly promise

and arrival of her husband's bonus. The estimate of expenses in a family budget, unlike those of Government expenditure, must needs be cut according to the size of one's income. So, everything, including wife's dreams in regard to *Kimono* and foreign dress, depends on the good-sized envelope that brightens the home.

The man is fond of his wife and perhaps more so of his little child, who being innocent of the non-elastic nature of the family budget, pesters him with the *abdar* for a 'real baby.' The man wails for a bargain sale in a large store. He has no idea how eagerly people like himself respond to such announcements as 50 per cent off, until he gets caught up in a terrific jam of people, from which he finds it impossible to extricate himself. He may be late to the office, where the boss, if he sets aside the 'I-won't-stand-this-any-more' sort of scowl, which he would meticulously mete out to the habitually tardy, may greet him with some unusually flippant remarks instead.

And the woman. The majority of the Japanese women are still very much under

the sway of the traditional etiquette of old Japan, despite the Western dress they occasionally wear and other modern features of the present. Their modest gait, which is a habit inherited from their forebears through ages of life governed by strict rules of etiquette, also attracts the attention of strangers.

The rules of Japanese etiquette are indeed a host, and many women spend years in learning and practising them. But for practical purposes, the average woman has only to master several main rules to be observed in her ordinary everyday deportment. How to walk and how to kneel correctly form the rudimentary knowledge of etiquette required of women of all classes. They are taught to stand erect on fully straightened legs and advance about only the foot's length at each step without bending their legs and without lifting their feet from the matted floor. Thus they almost slide along, the toes of their feet slightly raised as they move forward.

Kneeling also involves a complicated process of placing the hands to right

posture, keeping the upper body erect with the weight supported on the heels of her up-turned feet, and slowly proceeding to bow her head down towards her hand.

Another elementary rule to be learnt in Japanese etiquette for women is how to open and shut sliding doors. In fact, every detail of Japanese etiquette for women has been as strictly prescribed as the rules of the Tea Ceremony. One can at least say that there is propriety and grace in movement in this apparently mathematical process of etiquette.

The traditional etiquette is so difficult to learn that training in manners has been carried from the home into the public schools. All girl's high schools in Japan give courses in etiquette in regard to how to behave a hostess or a guest at a formal dinner, how to fill the guests' rice-bowl and to wait while the bowl is being filled. A student has to learn the proper manner of holding dishes and using chop-sticks, has to practise salutations, kneel down on a cushion properly, learn each details of Tea Ceremony and Flower Arrangement.

Girls of middle class families often accept

service as maid servant at a nominal salary, just to learn house-keeping. The home of the average Japanese people is spared of this eternal seed of discord, namely a maid servant. Not that the wife has no need of help. Cooking, dish-washing, and the general upkeep of Japanese home seem to make a slave of the wife. Here is a long day which begins at six, sometimes earlier, and does not end until her whole household is safely tucked into bed. Rising at six in the morning, year in and year out, she first prepares the morning meal, packs lunch for the children if there are any, and sends them off to school. After seeing her husband off to work, she does the dishes and goes through each room with duster and broom. It is her particular pride to have the corridors in the house polished like sheets of glass. Luncheon is finished, after which she has a few hours to herself. During the time she may sew, knit, darn, wash or do any of the thousands of things which must be done. She may as well go out to make a few purchases or even visit friends, if time permits. In any event she

is back home to prepare the evening meal and await her husband's return from work.

As a housewife, the Japanese woman has no peer. She is all but the wage-earner and banker all rolled into one, and she discharges her duties with remarkable efficiency. And, those who might think that the Japanese housewife is a wishy-washy sort of person ready to meet the very whim of her husband and every other member of the house, are sorely mistaken. She is queen of her household and though her throne-room may be the kitchen and her sceptre the lowly ladle, she rules with an iron hand.

In Japan, the status of the working woman is somehow unreal. There is the impression that she is not a worker striving for successful career, for fame in the line which she has chosen for herself. The great majority of women workers seem only to be biding their time. The salaried woman of Japan is waiting only until her heart, or her parents, choose for her a lifetime mate.

The matrimonial problem in Japan was once indisputably and universally a family

problem. The time has changed, and it is now growing more and more a personal affair. The modern young men and women have been so assertive and insistent in their attitude towards the problem that they often over-ride the patriarchal judgement in making their matrimonial arrangement. What is more, there is a strong tendency for the problem to become an affair of heart. The intelligent modern Japanese girls would marry according to their own choice and at their own risk. Whether they do so or not is another story. Their husbands get the fond love of their parents, but their husband's parents usually feel as if they were robbed of their beloved son by their daughter-in-law and insist on interfering in the affairs of young couple. The woman in the past might have accepted such an interference as a matter of duty, but the modern wife should not put up with it.

This modernism is shocking and even scandalous to the Japanese parents who lived in their younger days in the community in which the love affair was considered as immoral and the absolute obedience of

a wife to her husband as her prime duty. A daughter of marriageable age three decades ago blushed when her parents revealed to her their plan about her marriage, but an intelligent modern girl to-day is apt to speak right out on such matter and make her parents blush.

All kinds of ideas about marriage are entertained by modern Japanese girls. Some of them are sensible, others are fantastic and still others are ridiculous and impossible. A girl may say that a youngman selected by her parents is better than one of her own choice because her parents, who have no other wish than the happiness of their daughter, would select him with a mature judgement as the best for her husband. Another will say that she must have her choice in the selection, because she is the one to face whatever may be the fortune of her marriage. Another would insist that she must not marry a dentist or a doctor or the like because he is more in danger of being infatuated with other women. The fourth maintains that she must not marry a man unless she loves him. Whatever may be the case,

the girls have been growing more and more conscious of the claim of their hearts for love and to be loved. They are living in the atmosphere in which they may cherish the vision in their hearts and dream a rosy dream of love and home, but at the same time they have a stern reality of centuries old social convention against them. There is no denying that the old convention about marriage has been crumbling down before now, but the majority of girls still find it inexorable.

Japan has been undergoing a rapid change, almost swift, mentally and materially, during the past decade or two. With the change of social environment, the social ideal and sentiment of the people has also been undergoing a change. Under the new social condition, the modern Japanese girls apparently have not yet found a trodden path to approach the problem. They have come to it by different roads and have not had time enough to look at it in proper perspective. Their views on the subject, therefore, are very divergent.

So, the Japanese woman is a problem

in her own country; she is a problem to herself. Her sex is confronted everywhere with many a vexed question. The typical woman of present Japan is a conservative power. Her virtues are mostly of the olden type. Domesticity is her characteristic. She is above all a good mother. Her life is one continuous sacrifice of self. It is vicarious death, since self-sacrifice means death for the sake of longer life. The typical Japanese woman of the present, as distinguished from the 'modern' woman, is the product of the preceding ages. Woman, being naturally and instinctively more conservative than man, retains the vestiges of the past longer and more tenaciously than man does or can. A radical woman is considered to be an anomaly and a very radical one is a monstrocity.

Japan is at the cross-roads in her career. Half a century ago, when she awoke from her slumber of centuries, she found her way fixed by force of circumstances. She had to take a certain course or else she had to succumb to outside forces. She had little choice, and so she marched boldly into the unknown community of nations,

treading the Western path. Occidentalization was at that time her only way of salvation. But now things have changed. She is freer to act and can act for herself. Instead of surrendering herself entirely to Western influences, she looks back upon her own past and clings to some of its traditions.

But times are changing and with them the type of man or womanhood is also destined to change. When man's ideas of life undergo a transformation, woman must adapt herself to them. Just as what she is, has been the product of man's desires and necessities, so, as these changes, the new product is required,—and a new type of woman must appear. As man's pleasures and aspirations become more intellectual, woman must have a new and broader education. This tendency is well illustrated in the gradual decline of the *geisha's* trade.

The *geisha* or the nautch girls, time-honoured institution of the East, are professional entertainers or companions at festive gatherings. To the festive board, or rather the festive mat, they bring the feminine touch, the feminine influence, the female principle that make for true

balance and perfection for a harmonious whole. They are vivant decorations for the occasion, just like flowers in their vases and dwarf trees in their pots. Their attractions lay most in their artistic accomplishments, music and dancing, and in the faculty for lively entertainment. But they are sadly lacking in mental culture and their conversation has no quality or refinement. Their patrons are finding their companionship dull and uninteresting.

An appreciation of education for woman being keenly felt, the diploma of a recognized school has become a necessary endowment of a bride. Just as in China there is a custom requiring a bride to take with her the scroll of a famous painting, so it is getting to be the fashion in this country for a bride to take with her the diploma of a good school, to certify to her intellectual status.

Thus, while the followers of the old school exalt the beauty, partly real and partly fanciful, of the self-repression of Japanese women, the younger generation of both sexes rebel against the time-worn dogma; and the appearance of talented

women in many walks of life hitherto closed to them attest that their emancipation from artificial restraint is only the inevitable step. Woman suffrage is already in sight, though not yet introduced.

In the meantime, the woman's movement is rapidly gaining ground against the hide-hound conservatism. Woman social workers, literary lights, water-colour artists, stage artists, musicians, film-stars, educationists, journalists, scientists etc. have begun to establish a high reputation in their professions, showing that the time is pregnant with possibilities for girls with education and aspiration to succeed in any walk of life. It is inevitable that this situation and the economic pressure have a direct or indirect influence upon the girls, urging them to make conscious efforts to find their way into the street and office buildings in search of work. To-day thousands of them are found in office as desk workers, in department stores as sales ladies, in buses and tram-cars as conductresses, in hotels and restaurants as waitresses and what not. It has become practically impossible to find an establishment worthy

of the name which is operated without girl employèes.

Thus, the outlook for them to associate with youngmen has become infinitely large. She is growing impatient too. It would be only just if she protested against the absence of such labour-saving appliances as a vacuum cleaner, a washing and wringing machine, and central heating. She is already beginning to grumble. She often thinks of engaging a good maid. And yet a good maid is as difficult to get as a washing machine in a household of modest means. Keeping a maid does not, however, cost much only if she did not hear, talk or eat so much.

The changed circumstances have created complications in the Relations Law. Under the old system marriage is considered solely from the viewpoint of the family name and adoption is made in order to ensure the continuance of the family line, while in the matter of inheritance, a far greater stress is laid upon the family name than upon the property itself. Thus, the only daughter, instead of being married off as in normal circumstances, must bring her husband into her own family, and he must take up the

family name of the father-in-law. The property is transmitted to the eldest son succeeding him as the family head, without any share being given to his younger brothers. This places an over-emphasis upon the family line and accords recognition to the absolution of the family head. Thus it gives rise to a variety of domestic tragedies, all of which fall with their worst effects upon the shoulders of mothers and daughters.

There have been anomalies in the Marriage Law as well. A newly married couple may hold a wedding reception in the full publicity after having had the union solemnized at a church, temple or a shrine ; yet in the light of the present marriage law they are not recognized as legitimate man and wife, if they fail to file a notice of matrimony at the duly appointed office. Even if they have lived together for several years, they are not a legally married couple, if they are not so registered, and any children that may have been born of them have to be registered as illegitimate children, and are domiciled with their mother. But, on the other hand, the filing of the notice makes

them a legitimate couple even if they have never lived together. No certificate of marriage from the church or shrine is required in filing the notice of matrimony. It is this filing of the notice that makes a marriage legal ; all such matters as religious ceremonies and receptions count for nothing except for their purely social or spiritual value.

Divorce is recognized in Japan, but there is no separate Divorce Court. All matters of divorce, the recognition of the paternity of illegitimate children etc. are handled by the ordinary law courts. In consequence, there are very few women who dare to seek redress for domestic injustice because of their natural shyness and abhorrence of publicity of a scandal. The expenses involved, and the troubles attended with the procedure at the ordinary law court are also enough to discourage women from asserting their proper rights.

The outstanding difference between the family system in Japan and in Europe and America is that while in the former parents and children form the nucleus of the family, in the latter the married couple is the centre

of the family. The family in Japan used to be a large family or a patriarchal family, strong in the idea of constancy, aiming at preservation of family name, family lineage, mode of life of the family, family occupation and communal property of the family, just as in Bengal ; while the family in England and America is said to be a small family or a modern family, having no inheritance of family lineage, family occupation and communal property. A new family is created by a man and woman, and is dissolved when they die or separate. In short, the longevity of the family is that of the couple.

Children in those societies count very little. However strongly the parents and children are united by ties of kinship, the children will secede from the family and create new families when they are grown up and married. The new couples do not follow the mode of life of the old family as members of it, nor do they inherit the family lineage. They simply live their own lives wherever they please, apart from the parents. If the new couples inherit anything from the parents, it is nothing more than material property with a market value. There is

not from the parents' family any abstract or spiritual influence.

The Japanese family, whether large or small, makes it a cardinal point to preserve the family permanently. When they have no inheritors among their kin, they adopt inheritors from outside. This fact shows that they consider the succession of the family lineage more highly than anything else. Their object of inheritance is not simply property with a market value. The inheritance is not only material but also spiritual. The feature of the patriarchal family is that the continuation of the blood may well be spared, but the communal life of the family once established must not be discontinued. It will be seen that the adoption of a son is not due to an instinct for preserving the species, but to a natural demand of the communal life,—a life united by love and affection, so that each member's joy and sorrows are equally shared by all the others.

Thus in the Japanese family a wife must sink herself in the family customs supported by the husband's parents. However devoted she may be to her husband, she is not

qualified to be a member of the patriarchal family until she is a devotee of the family traditions. Such a wife is liable to be treated coldly by the other members of the family, and will subsequently be divorced. In Japan, this non-observance of the family traditions constitutes a salient reason for divorce. A wife is expected to give birth to an inheritor as well, for the permanency of the family life. In India the Hindu idea of *Putrarthé Kriyaté Varjya* (one marries only to get a boy) is reflected here. In present day Japan, however, few wives are divorced for childlessness, but in the past a wife's barrenness was considered the first reason for divorce.

The most important child is the boy-inheritor, and it is always the eldest son. He is obliged to keep up the family tradition and to maintain the internal order of the family. He must also assure the family members of a living. He is not allowed to choose a wife as he likes, since the character of his wife will have a great influence on the family. He would be deprived of the right of inheritance should he be disobedient to the family training and tradition.

But things have changed and joint family is going to be a thing of the past. In consequence of the increasing difficulty in earning livelihood the age at which men took wives was being delayed year after year. Until about the time of the Sino-Japanese War, no man of twentyfive remained unmarried. After the Russo-Japanese War, at the end of the Meiji era, however, it had become the general rule among men not to take wives until they had got on the wrong side of thirty. Education had been strictly devoted to the principle of 'good wives and wise mothers', but the ironical fact was that the demand for good wives and wise mothers was noticeably on the decrease, with the result that multitudes of women, with the doors of marriage shut against them, began to push forward into the labour market invading the field of men.

This made a 'vicious circle', as some would call it. As women encroached upon the working realm of men, making it harder for them to secure employment and causing their salaries to be lowered, they did not take wives even though they had

reached the age of thirty or thirtyfive. Owing to the annual decrease in the number of men perfectly prepared for married life, girls crowded out on the working front, having been locked out matrimonially. As this 'vicious circle' moved round and round during about a decade after the Russo-Japanese War, the golden principle of 'good wives and wise mothers' that had been at the centre of Japanese female education, had been withdrawn before they knew it.

To-day it has been quite a matter of course that women too should be inspired with the self-consciousness that they are human beings equal to men and be given courses in the sciences and arts on the basis of that realization. The ideology of the principle of good wives and wise mothers at last surrendered to the social facts that had developed far ahead of it.

When the foreign style clothes came into fashion among Japanese women, it was to many indescribably funny at first. Many people could not help bursting into laughter at seeing them toddling along the pavements, bent forward at

their waist, with their thick and short legs sacked in gorgeously coloured stockings such as would befit circus-girls, without the least consideration for harmony. But for them it was a quite serious attempt. This point of view may seem too favourable a defence of them to those who have only come to see them sweep along the Ginza these evenings with their artificial eyebrows and rouged lips.

When it first gushes out, water is as pure and fine as crystal, but it must become turbid, mixing with filth of all kinds, before it can flow at last into the sea. It is quite the same with life. You can never deny the original purity because of the eventual muddle.

One of the most conspicuous of all the social changes that have taken place within the past decade in Japan is the extensive Westernization, especially the Americanization of young girls. To-day on the street we come across many a flapper and judging from them one would be compelled to believe that they are left quite to the mercy of the formidable influence of the American films. This may

be true perhaps, but it is also possible, that is the effect of filth which has joined the stream on the way, not that the water has been turbid all along.

It is not solely within the world of women that every detail of the mode of life of the Japanese is being Americanized at a tremendous pace. There are buildings, show windows, goods on sale, neon lights, jazz, dances, revues etc., which make one suspect that the bright and gay atmosphere of Manhattan must have been transferred to this country, skipping over the civilization of the West, which has something of a mild Oriental air.

Since the Meiji Restoration, Japan has learned the English language, transplanted the English parliamentary government, adopted English monetary system, imitated the English Central Bank and introduced English exchange and made them standards for her daily life. Of course, they have introduced culture from France, from Germany and from America, but they have drawn a line between English civilization and the civilization of the other countries. The Westernization

of Japan prior to twenty years ago had always been carried out under the direction of the Government or of a few great thinkers. But the sweeping Americanization of life in Japan that has taken place within the past decade has needed no leadership. It has been a kind of natural phenomenon produced by the close economic contact between Japan and America, and historically quite a new trial for the Japanese. It will be interesting to watch and see, how far the people of Japan will be able to masticate, digest and turn into nourishment this American civilization.

EDUCATION

When Prussia suffered a crushing defeat at the hand of Napoleon, the first thing she did as a means of reconstruction was the improvement and encouragement of education. Japan, though under different circumstances, likewise made serious attempts for the diffusion of education. She adopted Western institutions and culture and for this reason the Government inaugurated the State University and made it a centre of learning.

Japanese at large are so profoundly interested in the question of education that they are behind no other Occidental people. One would be simply amazed to see the rush of book-lovers, both male and female, at bookstalls almost throughout the whole day. Incessant efforts and attention are paid both by the rich and poor to education in Japan.

Japan can be proud of her education in comparison with the Western nations for the uniform development of the institution. Viewed from the social classes, no other

country in the world renders such equal opportunity of the primary education to all sons and daughters of the rich and poor alike, as is done in Japan.

In England, owing to her peculiar social traditions and conditions public primary or elementary schools are generally regarded as for the children of not well-to-do families, and as such politely avoided by people above the middle class, who are obliged either to engage private tutors or send their children to private schools at not a trifling sacrifice, though this may mean nothing to the rich.

France also encountered great difficulty in the democratization of education on account of the opposition raised by religionists. Though public primary schools were established, the institution was soon checked, because those people who were dissatisfied with the separation of religion from education soon built private schools for their children. The uniform system of education, as being carried in Japan without discrimination between the rich and the poor is hardly realized elsewhere.

Another significant thing is the thorough

standardization of education all over the country. There is no difference in the school buildings, teachers and general accommodation between the urban and rural districts, as in most of the foreign countries, especially in the United States, where in the cities that embrace wealthy class of citizens, magnificent buildings are erected for public schools and nothing is left short for education; whereas not a few schools in rural communities are so miserable that they are run by only one teacher each, accommodated in a shabby structure.

But in Japan, no matter where you go, even if it is an isolated village, you will not fail to find the best building in the community to be the village primary school or *Jinjo Shogakko*, and the number as well as the calibre of teachers are justly distributed between the urban and rural centres.

Before the establishment of the new elementary school system there were many *Tera-koya* schools in Japan, something like the *Guru-griha* system of education in ancient India. The word *Tera* means Buddhist temple and *Koya* children's house. So, the *Tera-koya* was a school for children

established by a Buddhist temple. It gradually ceased to be entirely in the hands of the monks, and assumed a form and nature quite different from the original.

The school house was no longer in or attached to a temple, teaching was not confined to the monks ; *Tera-koya* became merely a general name.

Even to-day, Sunday schools are conducted at Buddhist temples and Shinto Shrines for juvenile moral culture and training. The Sunday schools in Japan owe their birth to the Christian Sunday schools as supplementary means of education to the regular primary schools and are open for the voluntary entrance of children. In Japan, freedom of faith is scrupulously safeguarded. From this viewpoint, strict demarcation line is drawn up between religion and education in all schools that are under the school ordinance.

The Sunday school education is tinged with religious colour, be it Christian or otherwise, and as such is regarded beneficient for the children, as it has ennobling qualities and virtues of its own, though different from the moral culture of the regular schools.

In the days before Meiji, the educational ideas in Japan underwent frequent changes due to Buddhist and Confucian influences. But the people were able to assimilate these foreign teachings, and by the help of the national constitution and sentiments peculiar to the Japanese, they developed a culture of their own.

The modern educational system of Japan dates from 1872 when primary educatian was made compulsory. The villages, towns and cities are responsible for providing a sufficient number of schools to the State. The guardians of school-age children are obliged to send them to school, unless they are physically or mentally defective. Every child, as soon as he reaches six years of age, is to commence six year's compulsory primary education. In view of this condition, it is a common rule that no tuition fee is charged in primary schools. But the pupils have to bear expenses for requisites, such as text book, paper, pencil etc., which cost an amount equivalent to annas six per month for the first three years and annas twelve for the later three standards. The poor are not only exempted from these

charges but are also provided with free lunch.

The poor parents consider sending their children to school as more important than the bare necessities of life, such as food and cloth. In case he is in difficulties, the ward social welfare commissioner makes every effort to solve his problems, so that the children of school-age are able to attend school. The children, on the other hand, try to earn their own expenses by working as newsboys or milk distributors or taking up any available early morning work before attending school. In Japan labour is respected and the principle of divine labour is observed by everybody. Such labour is common in Japan and so far as it is not a heavy burden on the children, the people and the authorities do not interfere.

The entire educational system and principle are based on the Imperial Educational Rescript given by the Emperor Meiji in 1890. The Rescript has laid down leading ideas and principles for the guidance of the Japanese, and it will not be quite out of place to give a summary of the principal points of the Rescript. It enjoins the

people to be filial to parents, affectionate to brothers and sisters, harmonious as husbands and wives, to bear themselves in modesty and moderation and extend benevolence to all, to pursue learning and cultivate the arts and thus develop intellectual faculty and perfect moral powers, to advance public good and promote common interest, to respect the Constitution and observe the laws, and should any emergency arise, to offer themselves courageously to the State.

It will be seen that the Rescript covers a wider scope of national advancement than the mere academic getting-by-heart sort of education as we have in India. The primary education consists of moral development, language, mathematics, history, geography, elementary and natural science, drawing, singing, and gymnastics. Besides, sewing is taught to girls and in some localities manual training is added to the curriculum in consideration of welfare of the pupils. The text books to be used in the primary schools are called the national regulation text books aimed at standardization of education and edited and compiled by the State. The numbers such text books reach are enormous figure.

On top of the primary schools, there is the higher primary school or *Koto Shogakko.* Usually it takes a child two years to complete, but there are schools good for three years although the number of the latter kind is rather small.

The primary schools are required to provide building, school ground, utensils and gymnastic ground. The buildings as well as the grounds, from the standpoint of the principle of education in its wider sense, are not monopolized for primary education alone. They are used for general educational enterprises, industrial, sanitation and philanthropic activities so long as they do not conflict with the regular school work. They are also permitted to be used for political election campaigns since the promulgation of the universal suffrage. In short, the schools have begun to play a very prominent role in social education, and such tendency is especially noticeable in agrarian communities.

A casual study of available statistics may prove interesting. In Japan there are at present :

Schools including Kindergartens and Universities	... ...	46,000
Number of Teachers	... ...	340,000
Students attending	... ...	14,000,000
Percentage of students in relation to population	... ...	20
Ratio of children of 6 to 12 years	...	99.58 p. c.

This is the highest percentage in the world.

Primary Schools :—

Number of schools	... ...	25,000
Expenditure per year	...	Yen. 250,000,000
Average per school	... ...	Yen. 10,000
Number of students	... ...	11,000,000
Average per school	... ...	440
Number of Teachers	... ...	25,000
Average per school	... ...	10

A comparison with the statistics of Bengal should be considered pertinent and be excused. The Report of the Administration of Primary Education, recently published by the Bengal Government, shows :

Number of schools	... ...	61,000
Expenditure per year	... ...	Rs. 8,300,000
Average per school	... ...	Rs. 136
Number of boys and girls	... ...	2,486,000
Average per school	... ...	40
Number of teachers	... ...	92,000
Average per school	... ...	14

Apart from the primary schools, there are preparatory educational facilities provided for children before they reach school age. Kindergartens and day nurseries of a public nature head the list of such facilities. Germany is credited to be in possession of an efficient and well developed educational system. But Japan has surpassed Germany in this respect.

The Kindergartens are open to children above three years of age until they enter primary schools. Their aim is to develop body and mind, foster good dispositions, rectify unpleasant idiosyncrasies and help home education. For the realization of those objects, special apparatus is available and facilities are provided for recreation, amusement, observation, though so-called text books are not used. The conduct of the Kindergarten is supervised by a superintendent of several tutors. Generally the tutors are expected to possess literary accomplishments equal or superior to those of regular primary school teachers. The number of pupils at any one Kindergarten is limited to 120, and no one teacher is allowed to take care of more than 40. The

variety and quality of the equipment are also subject to strict regulations.

The next important organ in the domain of infant education is the day nursery. In other countries, it is common to see such day nurseries attached to or established within Kindergarten. But in Japan, they have been regarded as essentially different organs. Generally speaking, the Kindergartens have been regarded as more or less aristocratic institution, patronized by people above middle class, and the day nurseries as resorts for the children of the proletariat.

Day nurseries have proved a great blessing to rural communities and the working classes in industrial towns. Education and nursing in the Kindergartens begin early in the morning and continue until late afternoon, the usual hours being 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

In farming districts during the sowing and harvest seasons, when all except those who cannot work are absent daily from morning until night, infants are sent to day nurseries. These nurseries with the help of volunteers, usually daughters of public

spirited families, care for infants above three months old.

In the education and nursing of infants earnest attention is paid to their future healthy development. Incessant and untiring efforts are being made to increase the number of Kindergartens and day nurseries and to bring their number up to the level of that of primary schools.

Secondary Education.

As organs of secondary education, there are middle schools for boys and higher schools for girls. Moreover, technical schools and training institutes for youngmen are provided for the purpose of giving instructions to boys and girls on subjects of practical matters concerning business and industry.

The course in the middle school extends over five years. The subjects taught are morals, civics, history, geography, foreign language (English, German, French, Chinese and Sanskrit), Japanese language, Chinese classics, mathematics, physics, chemistry, drawing, music and gymnastics. The subjects are selected and arranged into two groups from the fourth year, the pupils

choosing which of the two they wish to follow. This dual system is of benefit on the one hand to the pupils who wish to take up employment immediately upon leaving school, and on the other to those who wish to enter higher schools. The system of the girl's higher schools is made flexible to suit practical requirements. The course, as a rule, extends over five years and the subjects taught are same as in the middle schools. For those who desire to study subjects relating to domestic matters, a domestic course may be provided.

Universities.

A University, in the regular form, consists of several faculties, but a single faculty may constitute a University. Each faculty is required to have a post-graduate course in touch with one another. When a student has studied in the University for three or four years from the date of his admission and has passed a prescribed examination, he may be given the degree of *Gakushi*, corresponding to the Master's degree. In many Universities, faculties are provided for those who wish to pursue studies

only in some particular subjects, according to the prescribed regulations. A University is authorized to confer a Doctor's degree on persons who have pursued studies for a period of two or more years in the post-graduate course and whose theses have been approved by the Faculty Council.

The oldest of the 45 Universities is the Tokyo Imperial University. *Keio-gijuku* and *Waseda* were founded much earlier, but they were raised to the present standard in 1920 according to the ordinances enacted at that time.

Vocational education in Japan was somewhat behind the progress of the general education. However, since the end of the Great War, it has developed with wonderful rapidity, especially of late, owing to the positive encouragement and impetus given by the State, and it has become one of the paramount enterprises of the Education office. The secondary school grade vocational schools may be classed as: Technical Schools, Agricultural Schools, Commercial Schools, Merchant Marine Schools, Aquatic

Products Schools and Industrial Craft Schools.

As long as there are schools, there must be teachers. For developing primary school teachers, there are normal schools for girls and boys, and the higher normal schools for training men and women to be secondary school teachers

Outside of the school education, there are many other institutions of education in Japan. The youngmen's training course is one of them.

Youngmen above the age of 16, who do not attend the secondary school and work at shops, firms and factories can enter these schools for four years in general knowledge or some special subject, each course being over 100 hours. The time of the course is either in the early morning or in the evening. Side by side with the youngman's training courses, as an organ for development of the youth, there are youngmen's associations open for young people between the minimum age of 12 and maximum of 25. By means of lecture meetings, study groups and other gatherings, supplementary, general and vocational

education is augmented among youngmen and women.

Religion is, on principle, excluded from the educational agenda of schools. In all schools established by the Government and local ·bodies, and in private schools whose curricula are regulated by law and ordinances, it is forbidden to give religious instructions or to hold religious ceremonies either in or out of the regular curricula.

This is very significant in the Japanese educational system that knowledge is imparted to the students irrespective of their caste or creed. There are no sectional establishments to plant the seeds of communalism or racialism in the virgin soil of the young minds or to write the sermons of religious dogmatism on the *tabula rasa* of the young souls. So, there are no *Gurugriha* for the Shintos, no *Vidyamandir* for the Buddhists, no Seminary for the Diocese and no *Muktub* for the Mohammedans,—so many separate units for the education of different sects, as we have in India.

RELIGION

What is Religion in Japan? Before the Meiji Era, Shinto, Buddhism and Confucianism were recognized to be the three religions in Japan, but to a large extent Christianity has taken the place of Confucianism as the ethical teacher of the modern generation.

To a remarkable degree Japanese Confucianism was the forerunner and prepared the way of Christianity. Many of the first Christians in the beginning of the Meiji were Confucian scholars and Rongo and the Bible were usually found together on the study table of the first Christians. The Confucian idea of Heaven (Tien) is the best preparation for the Christian idea of God. The Confucian idea of righteousness prepared the way for the righteousness of the Christian way of life, and laid a good foundation upon which Christianity has been able to build its structure of Christian ethics.

Shinto is regarded as the indigenous and the national religion of Japan. Among

the very old religions of world, of which it is impossible to fix the foundation in the historical period, there are few which are still to-day living forces, and Shinto is one of them. Philologically the word is of Chinese origin. Shindo or Shinto, in pure Japanese is *Kami no michi* or "The Way of the Gods." This signifies the various *michi* or ways of beliefs and practices, ritualistic as well as ethical, in connection with the worship of the sacred objects of nature or of persons which are called *Kami*. When we consider these sacred objects and persons that go to make up the traditional Shinto pantheon from the point of view of their actual historical origin, we are only reminded of another religious system which has been since times immemorial and is still a live force in Asia—the Vedic religion.

Like the Vedas it has no founder, it has not grown around the personality of any particular Incarnation or Prophet, not under the impulse given by any particular inspired scripture, handed from heaven to earth at a certain time. Nobody has taught the Japanese its symbolism and its rights. Like the Vedic religion, it has no dogmas.

One can have any religious philosophy he pleases, and be a follower of Shinto. It is a cult of Nature under its most dutiful and beneficient manifestations. We find the personification of forces and aspects of nature such as wind and rain, thunder and lightning, sun and moon, earth and sky, as there are Indra, Baruna, Soma, Brihaspati in the Vedas. These Gods and Goddesses are the objects of marvellous stories related in the *Nihongi* and the *Kojiki* and the fantastic character of many of their adventures is by no means less than that of the *Puranas*. They have sacred mountains, the Fuji, the Outake, the Mantai, as we have the Kailasha, the Amarnath, the Badri-kedar. Nearly every place, well-known for the beauty of the Rising or the Setting Sun, is a sacred place. No doubt Shinto is a religion of Nature. The legends transport us into the world where the most unexpected things are possible, but there is under all these fancies, a poetical symbolisation of the eternal natural laws, and a hidden science that only the devotees can explain.

Among the *Kami* we find included the spirit of Emperors and princes, of heroes

and warriors who have died in the services of the country. It is the same as the cult of *Avatar* in the Vedic religion. Instances could be multiplied and not only local and foreign Gods, but also men and women remarkable for their great deeds, or for their marvellous or pathetic destiny, have from time to time found a place among the eighty millions Japanese *Kamis*. Another important group of *Kami* has its origin in the deification of functions or operations on which the early Japanese were vitally dependent. This gives us Gods and Goddesses of growth, generation, fertility, food etc., just as there are as many as thirtysix crores of Gods and Goddesses in the Hindu religion. By Shintoism is meant the characteristic ceremonies and beliefs relating for the most part to the worship of the indigenous Japanese deities or *Kamis*, whereby the Japanese people have celebrated, dramatized, interpreted and supported the chief values of their life.

The centre of Shinto is always a feeling of dependence on the *Kamis* who are regarded as living spiritual agencies, able to help human beings in their need. Prayers

are offered to these deities, as a study of the modern *norito* or ritualistic prayers reveals, for individual interests such as desire for health, offspring, good crops, peaceful homes and prosperous occupation, and as the circle widens, for the great interest of prosperity and peace for the people as a whole, the success in war, stability of Government and a long and majestic reign on the part of the Sovereign. We wonder if these *norito* prayers are only free translation in Japanese of the Hindu prayers—"*Rupam dehi, Joyam dehi, Yasho dehi, Dwisho jahi*".

The investigation of Shinto in its fundamental aspects becomes the study of Japanese racial psychology. In other words, Shinto in essence is identical with *Yamato Damasii*—'The soul of Japan' or to use the equivalent expression so widely current just now, with *Nippon Seisin*—'The Japanese Spirit'. The formative spiritual element of Shinto is a 'peculiar enthusiastic patriotic sentiment, often soaring into the plane of adoration or religious worship towards the Emperor or *Mikado*, who is a manifest deity.'

Another character of this religion, which

it shares with Hinduism is its suppleness, its capacity of assimilating new elements without losing anything of its proper features. When Buddhism was most powerful in Japan, Shinto had to compromise with it, by taking the from of *Ryobu Shinto.* Shinto is not a religious system which is still complete once for ever. It is a flowing current of living inspiration, and therefore is susceptible of addition as well as of evolution. In this respect it differs from Christianity and Islam, as well as from Hinduism. These may better be called democratical religions, founded upon the belief in the 'equal right of all mankind to share the salvation they offer through faith in a certain revealed truth.' Anybody can become a true Christian or a true Muslim and, taken in their essence, both Christianity and Islam are forces destructive of nationality, like most of the democratical world forces.

Among the many new sects of Shintoism, the most noteworthy is *Tenrikyo.* This has spread beyond the territories of Japan to Australia, China and the South Seas islands. It is a phenomenon idiosyncratic of the country that in these days of scientific

civilization, these religions pregnant with mystic elements not only exist but prosper and thrive.

Buddhism exercised a great influence in Japan, perhaps owing to the very same reasons and under the very same circumstances as in India. Religions seek to relieve mankind from the numerous sorrows it suffers from. The Vedic religion, and so the Shintoism, was more ceremonial than meditative. Finding that the phenomena of the Nature were inexorable, sometimes beneficial, but often destructive for the mankind, they wanted to please them by prayers and by the performances of ceremonial rites. Ultimately these rites got over the search for real knowledge and various Sutras of the Aryans: the Brahmana, Upanishad, Aranayak,—the Sastras only dealt with the detailed descriptions of those rites. Knowledge was thus bound over with the chains of Vedic rites. At this juncture the Sankhya philosophy of Kapila brought a new light and told the people that their salvation lied not in Vedic rites, but in knowledge.

Buddhism owes its origin in this Sankhya

philosophy of Kapila. The three basic principles of Buddhism : disregard of Vedic rites, Nirvana, and non-existence of Godhead, are the doctrines of the Sankhya philosophy. Nirvana is only a stage of Sankhya's Mukti, and though the theory of non-existence of God is based on the absence of proof of His existence, Kapila, as a matter of fact, condemned the Vedas with the help of the Vedas themselves.

The Buddhist theory of Karma or Action, derived from the Sankhya, which controls the destiny of all sentient being, not by judicial reward and punishment on an eventual day, but by the inexorable result of cause into effect, where the present is ever determined by the past in an unbroken line of causation, is indeed one of the world's most remarkable developments of ethical speculation.

The teachings of the Western philosophies are that "Knowledge is power", whereas the Hindu philosophy, and for the matter of that, the Buddhist philosophy teaches that "Knowledge is salvation." The fundamental difference between the two lines of philosophy is quite apparent.

But this is not the place to dilate upon the teachings of philosophy, though we had to enter into the above discussion only to show why Buddhism could inevitably appeal to the Japanese mind while Christianity or Islam could not.

Buddhism, bound up in Japanese art, history and literature, cannot be eliminated from Japanese life and thought. It is in the very woof and warp of Japanese life and civilization. The most impressive in Japanese Buddhism is the teaching of the Buddha nature, the awakening of the "Bodaism" or *Bodhichitta*, and the ideal life and vows of Bodhisattva. This Buddha nature is the essence of wisdom and comprises the desire for enlightenment. It is by the activity of the *Bodhichitta* that they can work for the good of all beings. The awakening of the *Bodhichitta* is all important. It is to be done by meditation, by reflecting upon the transiency and ignorance of material existence which results in suffering and by meditation upon the virtues of Buddhism. It is awakened when love for suffering creatures is called forth or when the intellect aspires after the highest

enlightenment, not only for ourselves, but for others. Buddhism made a great hit in Japan as it happened to be a religion closely bound up with Japanese nationalistic ideas. In point of doctrine, it is not a religion flavoured with nationalism ; one of its fundamental ideas is internationalism. Buddhism has espoused and on many occasions encouraged the cause of Japanese nationalism since it was brought to this country in the middle of the 6th century A.D. through Korea, though much altered since the missionaries of Asoke had preached it as far as they could.

Christianity could not make any headway in Japan. When, however, its irreconcilable differences with Buddhism are taken into consideration, it is no wonder that this Western religion, with a comparatively short history behind it in this country and with a too marked leaning to internationalism should prove an exotic in the seed-bed of nationalistic Japan. The masses were inclined to reject, for sentimental reasons above anything else, everything smacking of internationalism, including the doctrines of Christ. Under the

circumstances, some of the Christians even insisted upon the Japanization of Christianity, an attempt to combine its doctrine with the nationalistic ideas of Japan. But at any rate, there is no denying that left after all as a helpless bystander, this religion of the West felt deep chargin at its inability to take part in the grand parade of religions in Japan.

Modern education has become dominantly materialistic and utilitarian because of the biological sciences of the nineteenth century. The doctrine of evolution with its subsidiary ideas of 'the struggle for existence' and the 'survival of the fittest,' had a great influence in the education of the early Meiji period, largely as a result of the teaching of English science and philosophy as represented by Darwin, Huxley and Spencer. During this period, it was seemed necessary to the educational authorities to separate education and religion and to permit no religious teaching in the Government schools. Education carried on by the Government was placed on a purely scientific basis and had produced splendid and technical results.

But, Realization of the Soul is beyond the reach of scientific experiments. Our victorious Science fails to sound one fathom's depth on any side, since it does not explain the parentage of mind. For, mind was in truth before all science, and remains for ever the seer, judge interpreter, even father of all its systems, facts, and laws. Our faculties are none the less truly above our heads, because we no longer wonder like children at processes we do not understand. Spite of category and formula of Kant and Hegel, we are abashed before our own untraceable thoughts. The star of heaven, the grass of the field, the very dust that shall be man, foil our curiosity as much as ever, and none the less for yielding to the lens, the prism and the polariscope of science ever now triumphs for our pride and delight.

ARTS

Art, like the nature of a race, reveals itself in a naked form, or like a mirror reflects the characteristics of the people. The value of the Parthenon can better be realized when we understand Pericles and his time. The Italian Renaissance, or the art in the brilliant days of the French King Louis, or that in the Heian period in Japan exists with the people and the time as their respective backgrounds. To know the art of a country, one must of necessity have a preparatory knowledge of the peculiarities of a race, its culture, religion, social construction and further, ascertain its traditions.

In the case of philosophers such as Confucious, Mencius, Lao-tze or Chang-tze or regarding famous poets, it is difficult to bring out the vital features of these philosophers or poets unless we know the nature of these philosophies and poems. The difficulty is all the more enhanced when one tries to deal with the ancient Art in Japan, either painting or sculpture, which

did frequently choose the image of Bodhisattva as the subject. He will not grasp the significance attached to the subject unless he has a general knowledge of Sutras and the iconology of the post-Buddhistic art of Graeco-Gandhara.

Japanese art received strong influence of China and Chosen as well as India. The waves of these cultures came to Japan successively, but at no time Japan has been a mere imitator. Just as China assimilated and moulded to her own mode of thought and expression the idea of India, the native culture of *Yamato*, though a heavy debtor to both India and China, still is an individual racial product.

Buddhism had a strong influence upon the art of Japan. Many Chosenese artists came to Japan to execute works during the sixth century. In the ancient bronze mirrors one can find the influence of the Chinese design of the Han period. Some ancient textiles, which are still being preserved, show the influence of the Persian design. In the Golden Hall of the *Horyuji* temple, there is a unique example of the Indian Gupta style of

mural decoration on the walls, as in the cave temples of Ajanta. Besides the images of Buddha, the religious sculptures that were made in the early times are mostly modified figures of such Hindu Gods and Goddesses as Shiva and Kali; and there are not a few specimens at the temples in Nara that were actually made by Indians.

In the eighth century, the Buddhist priests constructed many artistic buildings in Japan, which were beautifully ornamented by sculptors and painters. In the middle of the sixteenth century intercourse with Europe was made through Dutch traders, who brought to Japan paintings, potteries, and other industrial art objects, which were well appreciated, and carefully studied. This tells us that Japan had foreign influence to a great extent. The Japanese people are highly susceptible to foreign culture. This latitude will be noticed throughout the whole of Japanese history, and is most clearly discerned in the vast field of Japanese culture.

Japanese art may rightly be characterized as the large and beautiful flower,

which blossomed indeed from the seeds brought from outside, but was never so well cultivated as in this most fertile of artistic soils. The recognition in this sense of the artistic merit of Japan, in spite of the fact that Japanese art derives from foreign models, is vitally important for those who want to distinguish and appreciate the arts of the Far East. How different they are, and how far more delicate and expressive than their prototypes!

A well known art critic comments in his 'Ideals of the East' as follows: "The water of the waving rice fields, the variegated contour of the archipelago, so conducive to individuality, the constant play of its soft-tinted seasons, the shimmers of its silver air, the verdure of its cascaded hills, and the voice of the ocean echoing about its pinegirt shores,—all of these are born of tender simplicity, that romantic purity, which so tempers the soul of Japanese art, differentiating it at once from the leaning to monotonous breath of the Chinese and from the tendency to over-burdened richness of Indian art. The innate love of cleanness which, though sometimes

detrimental to grandeur, gives its exquisite finish to Japan's industrial and decorative art, is probably nowhere to be found in continental work."

The truth of the above statement will be evident from the fact that in Japanese art there are many things which inevitably appear strange to Western eyes. For example, subjects of Buddhist paintings are almost beyond ordinary Westerners. The greatness of Japanese ink landscape painting is exceedingly difficult to understand because of the deep meaning which is hidden from those who have not been initiated into the mystery of Japanese landscape painting in black and white. The delicate touch of Japanese brush work and imaginative lines are quite difficult to understand. Moreover, the *notan* of Japanese ink is the most difficult thing in Japanese painting.

The modern art of Japan may be said to have had its beginning at the time of the Meiji Restoration. Japan absorbed Western civilization not only in social organization and politics, but also in the realm of art. The new outlook brought about in turn

sweeping changes in the cultural ideals of the people. The study of art of foreign countries was quite generally begun and Japanese artists went to Italy, France, England and America and applied themselves assiduously to the study of painting, sculpture and architecture.

They studied the ultra-modern styles and various styles and forms were introduced into Japan. Painters of Japanese water-colour have also received the influence of modern Western art. The French Fauvism, Futurism, Cubism were discussed by the artists and many art objects had been brought to Japan, which had wrought a strong influence upon native artists.

For some time past, Japanese artists have been discussing a movement for Nipponism, promoting real Japanese arts and abolition of the imitation of Western art. For the furtherance of arts, there is the Imperial Academy of Fine Arts which holds an annual exhibition of pictures, sculptures and artistic industrial products. An institute for the Research of Fine Arts has been newly established for the purpose of conducting a comprehensive research

and investigation of matters relating to arts. There are also numerous private organizations for the study of advanced science and arts, which issue valuable reports, hold exhibitions or arrange other useful undertakings.

One of the glories of Japanese art is sculpture and its importance in the history of art in the world has still to be properly recognized. Japanese sculptures, almost entirely preserved within the country as objects of worship in jealous seclusion, and never, except for a few important specimens, to be seen in foreign museums and collections, must be said to lie beyond the reach of art-critics abroad, and to remain in an unexplored domain for their aesthetic consideration.

The sculptors in Europe and America usually handle their subject with monumental meaning and in scientific and Kodak style, but the majority of the Japanese sculptors aim at reviving great men, famous women, philosophers, poets, and their work is considered successful in realizing this aim.

When the general condition is swept away before the influence of materialism

as it is to-day, even Art attaches undue importance to the technical niceties and tends to forget its spirit. There lies the sorrow of the present-day art. But Art cannot last long apart from the monistic principle.

The wood carvers of Japan quite often reveal the natural life of birds and animals and never neglect to make a minute study in shaping one single crow or a tiny dog. The Japanese artists regard with equal love plants, trees, the sea and the land. Even while suffering from the influence of materialism, the Japanese artists' instinct is an extension of love. They place no less importance in the delicate sense of beauty, that the wood itself imparts. A skilled carver makes effective use of the grain or texture of the material by deft touches of the knife or chisel, and there is a touching sincerity in them.

The plaster art in Japan is also prosperous. In this field, there has developed a mothod of expression through the use of chisel, based on ancient traditions. Along with this, there is the modelling that has been steadily progressing since the early

days of the Meiji Era. It is true that the art of modelling was learned from Europe, but anything that is worked out through the eyes, feeling and will of the Japanese artist is strictly their own creation. Young artists would talk of Rodin and admire Bourdelle, they would make the art of Maillor or Archipenko the object of their work, but it is nothing but a transient yearning after the great before these young artists awaken to their own art.

The fact that in the artistic work of these artists there is something common to them all, whether we may call it a better characteristic or a shortcoming, must be regarded as the will of Fate. The external influences have so greatly and so strongly impressed the temperament of the people as to have created a kind of national trait. To feel satisfied with petty success should be the last thing for an artist. Art, he must consider, is the work he shall carry to his grave. Aware as we are of the presence of so many prominent artists, we are yet prompted to make these remarks because of the signs of self-complacency traceable to this drawback in the national trait.

Japanese art, however, is not confined to painting, sculpture and architecture. There are other homely arts peculiar to Japan. The art of gardening, of flower arrangement, of tea ceremony and the doll art deserve special mention. There are regular schools to teach them and the Japanese people are, perhaps, the only nation in the world who cultivate and excel in these arts.

The salient features of a Japanese garden lie in the absence of as much artificiality as possible, in enhancing the natural beauty of trees, plants, stones, grasses and everything else in a graceful arrangement. Wooded hills, murmuring streams, placid ponds, narrow lanes studded with stone lanterns and quaint-shaped rocks readily attract the visitors' attention. A garden may be a miniature representation of some scenic place, but to the Japanese, it is an expression of a spiritual mood.

So with flowers. The Japanese are not content simply to admire the beauty of the blossoms, but seek to arrange them to express some mood of nature. Flower arrangement is not the art of keeping flowers alive in water, because even beautiful flowers

do not look beautiful if not properly arranged. There are, to-day, several thousand teachers of this art and a number of private institutions open to pupils.

The doll art originated from small paper dolls. They were appreciated as toys, but then the toy in clay appeared. Both were quite primitive, but paper and clay dolls are to be seen in some districts even now. Then appeared the carved wooden dolls, called *Kimekomi Ningyo.* The people accepted them as both toys and art objects. To-day a new school of doll-makers is making portrait dolls of interesting people.

In histrionic art Japan did not lag behind. Japanese people like music and they have their own music and musical instruments. Japanese music has a long history and its sphere is wide and complicated in form and content. Since the early days Japan has had a variety of music, though from time to time new forms of foreign music made their way to Japan and exerted a remarkable influence on the native music. A flute with six finger-holes and a *Koto* with six strings were the earlist instruments and they are being used even

to-day though in improved shape. Many musical instruments were imported from China, India, Chosen and Manchuria, an orchestra was formed with these instruments and the first performance was given in connection with Buddhist rites. Later, this music became popular among the nobility. This became the *Gagaku* which, with *Bugaku* dance, is still being protected and studied by the Imperial Court.

At the time, Buddhist priests were the cultural leaders and they gave rise to a new national music, which suited the æsthetic tastes of the ruling class—the *samurai*. Recitation evolved ; the recitation of long romance and war stories developed with literature of war of the period. The musical form of the recitation became the Buddhist vocal music.

Later, a new musical drama was developed. It was called *Noh* and was performed with masks. This was refashioned occasionally and is being performed to-day. The *Noh* play greatly influenced the *Kabuki* play and *Kabuki* dance. But in order to undersand the type and forms of the Japanese artistic dances, one must go to the

special *Noh* theatre and see the *Noh* plays. Though there is a great difference between *Noh* and *Kabuki*, they are one in the fact that the dance movement is not their central purpose. The *Noh* is symbolical and the *Kabuki* very sensuous.

The *Noh* play is not the creation of one time or age, it has an old history, since it was born like a mystery from the national impulse and love of literature and legends, from almost blind belief in Buddhism and ghosts, which were dressed in pure literature. Once the exclusive entertainment of the *samurai* and aristrocratic classes, it is now as widely enjoyed as any other form of public entertainment. Except for the stage dresses, there is very little so-called stage setting, and yet this leaves much for the spectators to fathom and appreciate in spirit what is lacking in visible paraphernalia.

Poet Noguchi writes : Since the *Noh* is the creation of the age when by virtue of Sutra or the Buddha's holy name, any straying ghosts or spirits in Hades were enabled to enter Nirvana, it is no wonder that most of the plays deal with those ghosts of Buddhism. That ghostliness appeals to the poetical

thought and fancy even in the modern age, because it has no age. It is the essence of the Buddhistic belief, however fantastic, to stay poetical for ever.

Most of these plays are allegorical and have deeper meaning than what the story reveals. They deal with psychology and the relation of Soul with Nature. "True it is that these pine trees shed not all their leaves ; their verdure remains fresh for ages long ; even among evergreen trees,—the emblems of unchangeableness, exalted in their face to the end of time,—the fame of the two pine trees that have grown old together." This is a passage from one of the *Noh* plays : *Takasago*, the happy play celebrating constancy, endurance, health and longevity, represented by an old man and an old woman busy in the work of raking up pine needles under the pine trees. "These plays" Ezra Pound writes, "were written centuries before Ibsen declared that life is a contest with the phantoms of the mind" and they portray that contest vividly and lucidly.

The doll-dance we had in Bengal until quite recently, depicted mythological stories and lacked in the psychological aspect, which

is the chief characteristic of the Japanese *Noh* plays. That is why the *Noh* plays could retain their popularity even up till now, while our *Putul-Nautch* had to slip away quite unnoticably.

The *Kabuki* play does not consist altogether of dances ; the dance, in reality, forming but one of its elements. In modern times a number of new *Kabuki* dances have been produced.

Kabuki performances are accompanied by music and orchestra which comprise a vocal chorus and the samisen, flute, and drums. Although dialogue is used, it is added by the vocal chorus and the music, which explain the actions and movements, and sometimes the plot. The life and thought of all classes of feudal society are well reflected on the *Kabuki* stage. Stage settings and costumes are gorgeous. The harmony of scene and dancing and of music and movement comprise the outward beauty of the *Kabuki*. But the inner beauty lies in the plot, based on love and duty in feudal ages. The *Kabuki* actors are trained from childhood. In the early days many actresses took the roles, but this was prohibited as it culminated

to tragedies. The roles of women, therefore, are taken by the *Oyama* or actors specializing in women's role, after devoting years to the study of women's ways. Recently *Oyama* has been declining in popularity.

One of the most unique features of the *Kabuki* theatre is the *hanamichi* or the flower way, which usually consists of two long platforms or corridors on the same level as the stage, which stretches through the audience to the stage in the rear of the auditorium, and the actors will pass down the *hanamichi* when they enter or leave the stage. In reality, it is an extension of the stage through the auditorium and is sometimes used as a street. It is very similar to the *Jatra* performance of Bengal with the only difference that in the latter there is no use of stage and settings, performance being conducted in the centre of the auditorium and performers passing through the audience to come from and go to the green room. To foreigners, the *Kabuki* play may be difficult to appreciate at first, because it is extremely complicated.

The Japanese people have been fond of the dance since olden days. They dance on

the slightest possible provocation, when a new house is built or the rice is harvested or a big fish is caught. Japanese dances include religious, artistic, juvenile and folk. The *Bon-odori* is the most popular folk dance in Japan.

The *Bon* dance is performed as a rural amusement during the festival season in mid-summer as well as in autumn in some local districts. They dance overnight in the open air. These are group dances in circles, accompanied by the samisen, flute and drum. The *Bon* dance is the most common folk dance in Japan.

Western music, dance and drama have naturally been introduced. Japanese music performed on the foreign instruments became popular. They have now several large symphony orchestras and jazz bands in principal cities. Influenced by the enormous popularity of Western music, Japanese music is trying to find a new method and new expression.

To the Indian ears, pure Japanese music would rather sound dull and monotonous. It appears to have a melancholy touch in its every tune, and its appeal and expression

are not so varied and pervading as in the Indian music.

With the Restoration, Western art and literature affected the native dance as well. The Western dance and ballet were introduced, new forms and types were brought in from America and Europe. At present ballets and musical revues are being performed everywhere, Takarazuka being the most notable place where the troupes give Japanese operattas and musical shows throughout the year.

Thee famous *Kabuki* also underwent remarkable changes. The Imperial Theatre was the first Western style theatre in Japan. With the appearance of many actors of unusual ability, the stage in Japan entered into a new era. The dramatist of this modern period had come under the influence of current Western drama and their mission was to introduce Western plays to Japan. Ibsen's plays were performed with great success. In addition, the drama museum at Waseda University and Shakespeare Society were established in Japan.

The motion picture is now the most popular amusement among the Japanese.

It was introduced to Japan for the first time during the Sino-Japanese War. The earlier productions were mostly dramatic films showing the plays of the modern type. In those days the studios were mere shanties where dramas were photographed on the stage just as they were acted. Following the Russo-Japanese War, the producers began periodical productions employing actors exclusively for films. After the great European War producers began to use real screen scenarios and employed stars. Since then, as the development of film technique progressed, Japanese films came to enjoy more popularity than the foreign productions.

Talkies, it goes without saying, have had a great influence on the film industry. The number of foreign talkies enormously increased and with the rise of the National Film Policy movement, there has been a demand for compulsory performance of cultural films at the cinema theatres.

The Education Ministry is encouraging production of cultural films and educational talkies for the schools. As a result, good educational films are being produced

gradually. Screen performances generally continue for a week. The programme usually consists of two feature films and news reels or cartoons. Recently many News Reel theatres have been opened in large cities.

LITERATURE

If a living language is bound to change, however imperceptibly, the Japanese language is leading a fast life. It is busy putting on new embellishments of imported terms to-day and discarding those of yesterday. The fundamental construction of the language is not affected in the least, but its appearance is certainly assuming quite an exotic style.

Like the Bengali language, the language of the Japanese has been flooded with foreign words, and, as in Bengal, the modern writers are responsible for this flooding of a linguistic domain with alien elements. They think it 'chic' to interlarde their writings with foreign terms, which would give a touch of modernity, so it seems to us, like some highbrow maniacs in Bengal who insist on sprinkling their conversation or writing with foreign phrases.

In Japanese language it is notable that these linguistic emigrants are readily taken into fold provided they are easily pronounced. In many cases these newcomers, found

indispensable for a certain purpose, but rather a jaw-breaker in their actual adoption, have been mercilessly chopped up into parts, arms twisted and legs kicked about to suit the immediate need. For example, *eleki* for electricity, *Mobo* for modern boy and *Moga* for modern girl, *inteli* for intelligentsia, *ide* for ideology, *ana* for anarchist, and so on and so forth.

There are 100 per cent immigrants too : such as, cent per cent, cook, car, Marxism, handbag, taxi, cafe, record, concert, speed up, journalism, diamond, art, jazz and how many more no one can tell. What woman is there in Japan to-day who would not appreciate the charming effect of a 'permanent wave' and coquettish result of a 'manicure' before going to a 'Matinee' carrying a 'Parasol' and an 'Opera bag' ? She is likely to drop in at a 'restaurant' on her way back to have a cup of 'coffee' with some 'milk' in and stir it with (let us hope) a 'spoon' and go to a 'station' to ride a 'train' home.

One should not wonder at the swarming sight of these foreigners, when the purely native words which the Japanese use to-day

turn out in a surprisingly large number to be derived from their neighbour China, and adopted in most cases in their original shape. But, the point is, how many of the people in the backwoods part of the country, who have been comparatively free from this 'foreign phrase craze' would understand any, or even some of these foreigners.

The Japanese grammar, the mode of construction of sentences, the place of nominatives, objectives and verbs are very similar to the Sanskrit language. So, it is easier for an Indian to learn Japanese than any other tongue.

Ancient Japanese literature we have very poor idea of. Our knowledge is confined only to *Man-yo Shu* and *Kokin Shu*, both collections of ancient Japanese poems, written by some 'inglorious Miltons' as well as by some warriors. They are love-poems, religious effusions as well as ballads on social matters. The former is the oldest collection depicting the simple and sincere thoughts of the old hardlings, while the latter is a subsequent compilation having a touch of poetic art and figurative expressions. There is also *Genzi Monogatari* compiled in

prose during the feudal period, which is considered to be a splendid masterpiece of romance of Prince Hikara Genzi.

In the other sphere of ancient literature, we find *Kojiki* the history of Japan, which is said to have been compiled after the time of Emperor Jimmu.

Modern Japanese literature can safely be said to have been born of Western literature, which was and still is very actively and comprehensively pursued. Though English, German and French literature has, on the whole, most frequently been the subject of study, Russian, Italian, American and other literature has also been earnestly studied, particularly since the Meiji Era. The writers looked to the Western literature for inspiration. For instance, the naturalistic trend, which sprang up after the Russo-Japanese War, later crystallized into the modern bourgeois literature of Japan and, as literary historians say, provided the basis for the new types of literature.

Particularly, Turgenev, Tolstoy and Chekhov of Russia and Flaubert, Maupassant, Goncourt and Daudet of France were most earnestly studied and digested

and they had a decided influence upon the Japanese literature.

The volume of European literature studied and translated during the period was considerable. Within twelve years there were as many as twentyseven translations of Shakespeare. Next to Shakespeare, Lord Lytton, The Earl of Beaconsfield, Sir Walter Scott, Emile Zola, Victor Hugo, Dumas, Jules Verne, Dostoevsky, Boccaccio, Goethe and Schiller were most widely translated and their political, fantastic and romantic works powerfully stimulated the Japanese of their time. The study and translation of European works were most active in the early years of Meiji and they affected most considerably the Japanese literature of those days, which was yet but slightly free from feudal influence in style and content. As the early period of Meiji was rather an age of politics, it was usually from a political viewpoint or, in extreme cases, with the direct object of political propaganda that European literature was then studied.

Japanese Naturalism first came to the

forefront after the Russo-Japanese War, during which period Japan achieved politically and socially an important stage of development. It was not simply a literary trend, but an extensive movement of social culture with the economic change of Japanese society in the background and based on the coming of the modern intelligentsia to consciousness of the Ego. It was so great a movement that it was interwoven with various thoughts, ideas and sentiments, at the bottom of which there was the Egoism, and all literary historians share the opinion that this movement gave concrete shape to the consciousness of modern individualism in Japan.

Japanese Naturalism was the inevitable product of the development of Japanese society and it arrived at the consciousness of the individual being through the study of Nietzsche and Ibsen. A pioneer writer of the Naturalistic school, Katai Tayama, who is an outstanding figure in modern Japanese literature, set about the production of Naturalistic fiction before the Russo-Japanese War. The impressionistic Naturalist authors of Europe fundamentally influenced

Japanese Naturalism and the eminent Japanese writers like Katai Tayama, Toson Shimazaki, Hakucho Masamune, Shusei Tokuda and their followers assimilated their technique and substance and thereby built up their own style.

The ascendancy of Japanese Naturalism, however, did not last long, as the study of these sources, whether Zolaistic, romantic or impressionistic Naturalism was so active that the ideas were branded by a number of contemporary Idealists as mere imitations of Europe and their social influence was condemned by them. Thus, Japanese Naturalism did not grow in a warm bed, but waxed strong through tests of criticism.

The literary world in Japan, as in almost all the parts of the globe, presents a dramatic struggle for supremacy between two movements—old and new, conservative and radical. The Naturalists were soon branded as old schools and back-dated. They were thought to have discharged their duties and fulfilled their mission, which were the very reasons for their existence. The work produced by men belonging to these older schools lost its

quondam charm and force of appeal, due neither to the decline of the quality of the work nor to the lack of enthusiasm on the part of the authors, but solely due to the fact that the tide of time had changed and that the people had begun to demand something different, something new. The roots of the older school commenced to die out and a new movement came with the ambition to establish literature, which appealed to the new temper of the time and to succeed the old schools, whose greatness it could not but recognize.

This gave rise to proletarian literature. Proletarian literature now dominates many lands: it is the main current in Soviet Russia, it is one of the two main streams in Japanese thought, it is strong in China and in India, and strong in Germany and Middle Europe. The proletarian literary movement has embraced not only the different branches of traditional literary schools of dramas, novels, poetry and songs, but music, painting, sculpture and Cinema as well. It was, so to speak, a mighty tidal wave of thought which swept over the country, carrying the people's views,

social movements, politics and culture in general before it.

For a decade, from the end of Naturalism to the beginning of the proletarian trend, there appeared and disappeared various groups and isms in Japanese literature. These schools and isms, with all their own peculiarities, are accurately considered as one school of Idealism in that they were born out of criticism of and re-action against Naturalistic Realism and also in that they contrived to free and exalt emotions with a subjective attitude towards literature, departing from the realm of objective Realism.

The most outstanding writers of this period are Junichiro Tanizaki, Kafu Nagai, Soseki Natsume, Saneatsu Mushakoji and Kikuchi Kwan. Like any advanced European writer, Kikuchi Kwan is engaged more with humanity than with nationality ; he is an ultra-modern writer who abolishes the separate sense of continent and colour ; and he ranks amongst the foremost dramatists of the world. We could read and enjoy some of his dramatic works, notably the *Tojuro no Koi* and the *Chichi*

Kaeru and our impression can be better expressed by quoting from the review of these dramas by the *Morning Post*—"Indeed the West might learn something from these wonderful little dramas, loaded as they are with significance, beauty and great art. If there are more Japanese dramatists like Kikuchi Kwan, Japan has reason to boast of her modern drama. Nor has she anything to learn from Bernard Shaw and John Galsworthy."

That Japan has more dramatists like Kikuchi Kwan is proved by the presence of other forceful dramas we had come across, like *Sakazaki Dewa no Kami* and *Tojin Okichi Monogatari* of Yamamoto Yuzo and the 'Priest and His Disciples' by Kurata Hyakuzo. They take their place among the greatest dramatists and profoundest thinkers of the age.

Proletarian literature until very recently took the lead in Japanese letters. Though it is the literature of the proletariat, it at first was written mostly by intellectuals of leftist tendencies and only in later years did a growing number of born proletarians take part in and strengthen it. Korehito

Kurahara contributed most to the stimulation to Japanese proletarian literature by the study and translation of such brilliant writers of Soviet literature as Libedinski, Gladkov, Panferov and Sholokhov. Though it took the lead in contemporary literature, bourgeois literature existed and stood out as distinct from it, all the while.

The fact that proletarian literature rose and came into ascendancy was the inevitable result of the definite splitting up of Japanese society into two great classes, and of the accompanying intensification of the struggle between them, expressing itself in the domain of literature. Therefore, it seems to have been born as in instinctive reaction against bourgeois literature, and could not find a direct stimulation to creation as its predecessors had.

Various phases of society that is either disintegrating or crumbling on account of the economic panic, have been taken as materials and the lumpen-proletarians have been made heroes of novels and dramas. Lumpen-proletarian originally was understood to indicate one of a group who had neither efficiency nor the will to work, a practical

social outcast but now it includes those who have both ability and will to work, but are unable to find work, suffering from the pang of unemployment; those who without the class consciousness of labourers, fight their fate individually unorganized. In its narrow meaning, the lumpen class includes those vagrants in the slum quarters and on the park benches, and in its broader interpretation it applies even to a type of men and women who lead a mobile life, the debauch with a feeling or so many queens of amorous markets with the claim of a heart.

There are novels in which the favourite material is the salaried men who work in banks or for business houses. Sandwiched between the capitalist and proletarian classes they lead a life of constant uneasiness always feeling the sword of unemployment hanging over their heads. They have a pride of their own as intellectuals, but lack audacity to declare themselves to be such. The almost despairing mood in which they pass their days is vividly described in these novels. As to the literary efforts of the Marxists, they from the nature of their class-consciousness always make workers

and farmers stand opposed to capitalists and land-owners for the purpose of intensifying the will to fight.

The young men and girls who still possess the ideas of the feudalistic days have been relegated to the background in the current literature. The presence of such young men and girls, if any, tight-jacketed by traditions and without the vitality to adapt themselves to the changing times, is abhored like the plague by the younger generation of today. Similarly the open meadows, where the evening primrose smiles or the green fields, where the skylarks sing in the azure blue, no longer hold their wonted charm. Novels and dramas invariably begin with a movie hall, a bar, a cafe, the pavement of the Ginza, a magnificient salon, and so on.

There is also a class, which is remarkably inclined to take the influence of mechanical technology into literature. Needless to say, that technology is the moving factor of modern civilization and its influence is felt keenly in aspects of life.

The present status of Japanese letters is featured by the retiring of proletarian

literature into the background under the pressure of extreme political reaction with, on the other hand, a returned hegemony for bourgeois literature. The new literary movement conceives that art, under no circumstances, ought to be judged, much less domineered by the orthodox teachings of the Marxism, socialism or any other authority than the independent æsthetic criteria. Art can be evaluated quite apart from its pragmatic or utilitarian considerations only when it is emancipated from the fetters of extra-artistic influences.

The Shinko group, headed by Toyokichi Kuno, directs the theoretic attack against Marxism. They are against the highly attenuated dogmas of Marx and his disciples. Their antipathy to socialism has its source not in conviction as to the fundamental fallacy of socialism as a movement, but in seeing how it deals with art and literature. Marxism tries to convey its own doctrines by literature and art. The attempt is really to deprive art of its independence and to place it in a servile position in the conceived social order. The new art movement strongly resents this

attitude of the Marxian literature and wages war against it, hoisting the banner of art for art's sake.

Since socialistic literature is bound by an ideology of its own, its writers can neither select any subject they wish to handle nor treat it in a natural and spontaneous way. They must always proceed with those prejudices innate in socialism and end up in advocacy of a set of ideas peculiar to it. These inevitable pre-notions deprive the works of their naturalness and make them mere propaganda, which may appeal to those who accept the ideology but they tend to provoke the apathy of those who do not accept it. This has been the chief reason why the Socialistic literature cannot hold its own against the onslaught of its hostile literary schools.

But, can literature be free from the current influences ? It is a strange fact that while the grim reality of life's problems compels the attention of the people and make them strive for their solution, there is a distinct trend of thought and feeling among the populace to escape from these distressing problems and seek fleeting consolation and

joy in a work of art. But, the present is a time of ultra-realism in so far as national psychology is concerned. At such juncture it is doubtful whether a literature which depicts idle dreams, having no value of possibility of realization, can exercise influence upon the mind of people.

The conditions of living have undergone rapid transition in Japan. The onslaught of economic depression has rendered living extremely difficult for the masses. In such circumstances it is inevitable that the attention of the people is drawn toward immediate problem of living. Nevertheless we cannot fail to perceive a certain charm the new movement exercises upon the mind of the younger generation to whom modernism is a creed. Somehow it feels special intimacy with life of cities and dislikes country life. The subjects more eagerly treated are generally confined to the epicurean conduct of the leisure class in metropolis with exaggerated treatment of sex aspect. The dominant interest is decidedly plebeian.

The Japanese poetry has a charm of its own. The rhythm of poetry with a simple

key-note like that of the Japanese poems, is always changeless, and gives one such a feeling of lassitude that will end as something like an unbearable grief.

Individualism is not a thing of the Orient and Japanese poetry creates an atmosphere which is impersonal, not touched or wounded by the sharpness of vulgar individualism. A reader of Japanese poetry must have the atmosphere soft and grey and read them with appreciation or love, but not with criticism, which is an art more or less cynical. One who has the fullness of love which disarms criticism and moves beautifully life's orchestra of the five senses, can fully command the art of appreciation.

The Japanese poetry is remarkable for its brevity. It is not the lyrical poetry in the general Western understanding, but the Japanese mind gets the effect before perceiving the fact of their brevity, their sensibility resounding to their single note, as the calm bosom of river water to the song of a bird.

"That is valuable as a talisman rather than as a picture"—writes one of the English critics: "It is a pearl to be dissolved in

the wine of a mood. Pearls are not wine, nor in themselves to be thought of as a drink, but there is a kind of magic in the wine in which they are dissolved." That magic of Japanese poems is the real essence of lyrical poetry of the highest order.

Japanese poets, some would say, are lacking in creative power, and do not aim, like many Western poets, at becoming rebuilders of life. It is because they do not deal with poetry as a mere art, but look upon it as the most necessary principle along which their real life shall be developed. They recognize the existence of the compromising ground of passion, where as members of society they find their safety unlike the uncompromising creatures of passion like Shelley, Byron, Browning and Swinburne.

Like Indian, or more precisely the Bengali poetry, the poetical thoughts of Japan fly into an invisible spiritual domain. At any rate, they create a clarified pure realm where one can, through the inspiration of rhythm arrange his own minds. The Japanese poems are delicate, and the minds of the readers should also be equally delicate, when they

are to appreciate them fully. To a casual reader these poems may not mean anything, they would appear like a piece isolated, swift and discontinuous ; but it is the appreciation of readers that makes them complete and whole. The real value of them may be only measured by what mood or illusion they inspire in the readers' mind. What they aim at and practise is the evocation of mood or psychological intensity, not the physical explanation, the lines like these :

> Autumn's full moon :
> Lo, the shadows of a pine tree
> Upon the mats.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

As England is the foremost manufacturing country in the West, so is Japan in the East. Both these States are active in the markets of the world, the former as a matured industrial nation and the latter as a rising industrial country.

It was just after the World War, when the foundation of the national economy of Japan was shifted from agriculture to manufacturing and commerce, that Japan made her debut as a rising industrial country. Since then the manufacturing industry of Japan has made steady progress and now-a-days ranks first.

According to the census the percentage of the population engaged in agriculture is about 50 per cent of the whole, while that in manufacturing is only about 20 per cent. The Japanese farmers, who comprise half the whole population, met with a set-back owing to the scarcity of arable land and other factors. The conflict of interests between industrial centres and rural communities has been deepened year after year. This

conflict is one of the grave problems in the economic life of Japan.

Agriculture, which is one of the most important industries of Japan, has a very long history, having its origin in the time when the Empire of Japan was founded. Recently, however, it has somewhat declined in importance in consequence of the development of industrial enterprise, but all other industries together, would not equal the number of persons engaged in agriculture alone. Moreover, the number of farmhouses is about 49 per cent of the total number of houses in Japan. Therefore agriculture may safely be said still to retain an important position, and rank as one of the leading pursuits in Japan.

As far as the amount of arable land is concerned, Japan's standing in this connection is very small as compared with other countries, but the production per unit of space is greater as compared with the rest of the world.

Following shows the arable areas of the world. Unit 1,000,000 cho-bu (1 cho-bu is equal to 245064 acres).

India	... 155	U. S. A.	... 138
Russia	,.. 110	Canada	... 28
France	... 22	Germany	... 20
Poland	... 18	Spain	... 13
Japan	... 6	Britain	... 5

Japan's agriculture has gradually adopted scientific management. The Japanese Government has made regulations for Industrial and Agricultural Associations and have opened Banks as the banking organs for farmers.

Rice tops the list of the important agricultural products. Then comes wheat, barley, red beans, soya beans, millet, buck-wheat, sweet-potato, sericulture and many others.

The ratio of land under cultivation per each 100 acres of arable land in other parts of the world is as follows :—

Switzerland 30.8 acres, Norway 33.7 acres, Britain 35.3 acres, France 58.8 acres. New Zealand only 16 acres, while Japan produces food products for 105.5 acres per each 100 acres of the land under cultivation.

The reason why in Japan the cultivation space is larger than the actual space of the land under cultivation is that the Japanese

farmers have a two-fold harvest in a year, planting rice plants and possibly sweet-potato or some other things in summer, and after their harvest, planting wheat and others in the same space.

It is noteworthy that in Japan, unlike other foreign countries where capitalism has developed by normal means, the industry and commerce have made the progress apparent at the present day under the constant protection and encouragement of the Government. This is, however, not without reason.

During the Meiji Era, the imperialistic pressure of the Powers made itself continuously felt in the Orient. The Japanese Government, therefore, was obliged to take the initiative in promoting industrial revolution and fostering capitalism. Consequently, Japanese capitalism has developed, not under the banner of liberalism but out of national necessity. The Japanese capitalists established their economic position with the aid of the Government, instead of by using their own influence to foster the capitalistic economic system.

The civilization carried forward from the Meiji Era, which was characterised by militarism and tradition, encountered a momentous transitory period, in the course of which some changes were inevitable. At this juncture, the European war broke out and this brought about drastic changes in social conditions, not only in Japan, but throughout the world. All those who took part in it sustained a severe setback, regardless of whether they emerged victorious or or vanquished. The capitalistic economic system in Europe took the first step toward decline. All commercial and industrial enterprises suffered from inactivity and as European countries devoted their efforts more and more to the consummation of the struggle, Japan's foreign trade enjoyed unprecedented prosperity. Overseas markets were extended remarkably and enormous orders from abroad were received for Japanese industrial manufactures. To fulfil these orders new companies and factories were established in rapid succession. The almost unlimited expansion of industrial undertakings called for an almost unlimited amount of labour, and

farmers deserted their cultivated lands and came to the cities. The working class in Japan, as the result, has been greatly enlarged in number.

The development of the manufacturing industry in Japan is said to be one of the wonders of the world. But in the beginning it was a development in light industry only. Although the World War gave an impetus to the progress of heavy industry and the chemical industry, the progress was checked with the restoration of peace and the resumed activities of European and American countries. Industrial imperialism, especially the adoption of the policy of bloc economy in the industrial countries of the West, brought a stress into the economic life of Japan, and the stress seemed to keep up with increased force. Japan was compelled to give up her policy of light industry and free trade. For the maintenance of her economic life, she was forced to adopt a policy of moderately protected trade and autarchy.

The rationalization of industry occasioned by the earthquake and other disasters, the world wide business depression and the

opening of new markets such as Manchoukuo and North China have stimulated the development of the Japanese manufacturing industry. Meanwhile, it cannot be denied that the low exchange rate of the Yen has greatly helped the development of the industry. As the establishment of an exchange equilibrium fund seems not be realized in the near future, in consideration of the present financial situation, Japan has to let the exchange rate take its natural course. Until such a fund is established, the effect of the low exchange rate on industry will continue.

With the exception of raw-silk, all the light industries, such as cotton spinning and textile manufacturing, have been rationalized to reduce cost and increase competitive power in world markets. Taking advantage of the low exchange rates, they are pushing ahead in overseas markets. The rationalization of industry was carried out thoroughly to meet the recent situation created by the world business depression and depreciation of currency in foreign exchange.

The heavy industry of Japan along with

the chemical industry is making steady headway. The development of these industries has been stimulated by the world tariff war. In the sphere of mechanical engineering, the facilities for shipbuilding and rolling stock and motor manufacturing have become complete. Mass production of aeroplanes and automobiles has been started of late.

In the light chemical industry, celluloid and rubber goods and pulp and rayon yarn are produced in a great quantity. In the heavy chemical industry, the progress in the manufacture of chemical fertilizers has been remarkable.

Japan's export trade depends on light industries, especially those producing textiles. This fact reveals that there are several serious obstacles which prevent the development of the means of production; as the production of such fibre manufactures, the export of which correspond to about 50 per cent of the total value of exports, is not fixed owing to the shortage of the domestic supply of raw materials and also on account of the varying conditions in the overseas markets.

Raw silk and cotton piecegoods are the products of Nippon's two largest industries. The silk reeling business has not been paying of late and is detested by financiers because it has been shut out by the rayon industry and, due to its nature, cannot make great use of mechanical devices. But it has its own advantages. Sericulture is a profitable occupation subsidiary to farming, and as such its abandonment by farmers is almost impossible. Recently measures have been planned and put into practice to save the silk industry from ruin by increasing profit, improving the quality of raw silk, marketing of finished goods in place of semi-finished articles and increasing the output of special kinds of cocoons.

The spinning and weaving industries of Japan developed marvellously and enjoyed great profits, but recently Japanese textile goods have become the target in the tariff war of the world. The future of this industry, however, does not appear very bright, as it is a rising industry in China as well as in India, which were, and still are, important customers of Japan's cotton goods.

The textile industry is one of the undertakings that are the first to be run on a modern and large scale in the process of the development of capitalistic economy. That is, the textile industry is one of the first industrial enterprises that develop in colonial areas, as well as in less advanced countries, subsequently reducing the need for foreign supply. In view of the fact that Japanese cotton piecegoods are sold principally in two British colonial countries, on the strength of exchange depreciation, domestic industrial rationalization, cheap labour etc., the trade is being affected by two factors, namely, the competition with Lancashire and that with the rising native industry.

Control in the cotton industry is at present enforced on an extensive scale from production to distribution. It has its origin in the import restrictions of raw cotton which has consistently been strengthened in order to better the adverse balance of the international accounts of the country. The control over the productive activity is divided into three spheres: import restriction over raw cotton, control over

capital supply for promotion of new enterprises and extension of the existing facilities, and the compulsory admixture of staple fibre in cotton yarns for domestic consumption.

In cotton textile manufacturing, the expansion of equipment for mass production and the fitting up with reserve funds of equipment for rayon, staple fibre and woollen production as side-lines have been devised. The woollen industry has so developed that it is now not only producing enough woollen cloth to meet the home demand, but has begun to ship abroad. But the business has also been considerably reduced due to restrictions enforced against the importation of raw wool and production of yarns after trade disputes arose between Australia and Japan.

While import of raw wool is restricted, measures have been taken for the economy in consumption of woollen goods within the country. The use of raw wool is severely curtailed for the manufacture of woollens for domestic consumption, but the manufacturers are obliged to export their textiles under the compulsory system.

So, in spite of the restrictive measures imposed on the industry, exports of woollen yarns and textiles have shown a conspicuous rising tendency, India having been the most important buyer.

The fundamental weakness of Japan's foreign trade is that the supply of raw materials within the country is limited. Japan's industries depend to a large extent on foreign supply of raw materials. Japan's export of raw materials corresponds to only about 4 per cent of the aggregate total value of the exports, while the import of raw materials amounts to well over 60 per cent of the total value of the imports.

Much is being said about the raw materials supply shortage in Germany, but the German import of raw materials corresponds to about 37 per cent of the total value of the imports. Moreover, the export of raw materials amounts to more than 10 per cent of the total value of exports. The conditions in Germany, therefore, are much better than those in Japan.

All countries, where the capitalistic

regime has fully developed, import raw materials and export finished products. Nevertheless, the difference between the raw material import and the export of finished manufactures from Japan is far greater than that of other capitalistic countries. This does not signify that the industrialization of Japan is more advanced than that of the United Kingdom, the United States, Germany and elsewhere. On the contrary, it reveals the fact that the domestic supply of the raw materials is far smaller than in those countries.

Japan is a "have not" country. The shortage of the domestic supply of raw materials is keenly felt in Japan's industrial circles. This shortage of domestic resources, however, is not entirely due to the natural conditions of the country. Take for instance the raw cotton. The climatic and geological conditions in the southern parts of Japan are declared by technical experts to be suitable for raw cotton cultivation. In fact, in ancient times Japan used to produce enough cotton to satisfy the domestic needs, but to-day it does not pay. The agricultural enterprises in Japan are

being run on such a small scale that they are far from the standard seen under capitalistic regimes.

It needs not be said that the scale of industrial equipment and facilities is in keeping with the economic requirements of each industry, but generally speaking the new industries are managed on a large scale and the native industries on a rather small scale, with some exception of course. A factory with from 5 to 29 workers is called a small factory, a factory with from 30 to 199 workers a medium sized factory, and a factory with 200 or more workers a large factory. These factories are classified below according to their equipment :

	Large	Medium	Small
Percentage of Factories	1.8	12.4	85.8
„ „ Workers	39.3	30.9	29.8
.. .. Production	44.8	31.9	23.3

The manufacturing industries in Japan on a medium and small scale cannot be ignored, as 98.2 per cent of the factories, 60.7 per cent of the workers and 55.2 per cent of the output are theirs. The average

production per factory increases in geometrical progression in accordance with size. This may be attributed to mechanization of equipment as a whole, there being no difference in production capacity in the workers in large and small factories.

The characteristics of these small and medium industries are specialization in lines of production, operation with limited credit and production of goods to order. Owing to lack of organization, uniformity of products cannot be secured from them and due to lack of efficient sales agencies, they are easily exploited by jobbing merchants, on whom they have to depend to obtain working funds.

To make good these deficiencies by legislation the regulation of associations of manufacturers of the principal products and of industrial associations was undertaken. By these regulations, the industrial associations aim at correction of the defects of small-scale industries, improvement of products, regulation of output, joint specification of goods, joint purchase of materials and finished goods and financial assistance. The

manufacturers were thus freed from long-standing evils.

One of the most remarkable industrial phenomena of Japan is the progress of the cartel system. This system was established in Japan to meet the world business depression after the World War, and it has developed rapidly under the law for controlling important industries.

But as the industries set on the way to positive development, they had to encounter a new phase of labour trouble. Formerly workers employed at small factories were not organized and were content with the care and friendliness of their employers. But seeing the prosperity of their employers they began to demand not only higher wages, but also the promotion of their general welfare. Whenever there was a chance, they left small factories for large ones with better welfare arrangements, and this caused a scarceness of labour and high wages in small factories.

In consequence of the unprecedented commercial and industrial prosperity, investors obtained enormous profits, and both large and small *Narikin* or 'Nouveaux

riches' became numerous. The wages of the workers were raised as a matter of course, but the advance in price of commodities was quicker and the cost of living became very high, so that the workers began to entertain anxiety regarding their ability to subsist. The anxiety eventually developed into a resentment against the extravagant life led by the *Narikin*. The outbreak of labour disputes was inevitable in the circumstances.

Primarily speaking, labour movements are a by-product of the growth of the capitalistic economic system. One of the outstanding features characterizing the labour movement in Japan is the recent abrupt and dashing nature of its development, as compared with its tardiness in the past. Another feature is the fact that, although its standard as far as thoughts and ideals are concerned is on a par with the standard of labour movements in other parts of the world, the policy of the movement is apt to be affected by theories, instead of being based on the immediate needs of the workers.

The Sino-Japanese War enabled Japan

to effect industrial revolution and social conditions consequently assumed a capitalistic complexion. Labourers too gradually became class-conscious, and various labour problems arose which resulted in the development of the labour movement. So, it may be said that the labour movement in Japan began after the Sino-Japanese War, which mitigated the conditions which had previously retarded its developments.

Due to the brusque militaristic policy of the Government, however, the movement was supressed to such an extent that it barely existed during 1900.

After about twelve years the present Japan Federation of Labour was organized. This organization, coupled with the remarkable development of the capitalistic economic system, initiated a new stage of progress which eventually resulted in the achievement recently recorded. At present the labour movement in Japan has as its background the highly developed capitalistic economic system. Its foundation is firm, now that the labourers' class-consciousness has ripened.

The days when the labour movement in

Japan was directed exclusively for the betterment of working conditions are gone. The trade unions whose activities were hitherto confined to the economic struggle have now proceeded to take part in politics.

All the facts, as well as the current of thought resulting from well-developed class-struggles in more advanced countries, always have a significant bearing upon labour movements in less progressive countries. Regardless of whether such influence is beneficial or unfavourable, the fact remains that it travels directly and widely. It is always the progressive intelligent class of people who are the most susceptible to such influences, and such people play an important role, either directly or indirectly, in the progress of the labour movement. Generally speaking, the labour movement in less advanced countries is always guided by the intellectual class, whose influence constantly makes itself felt in the process of development. Japan is no exception to the rule. Her labour movement has always been affected by happenings abroad.

With the development of industry, girls,

the same as elsewhere, have been the advanceguards of women's steady inroads upon the field of male activities. The increase in the number of factory girls, sales girls, office girls and the improvement of their position have in general corresponded with the growth of trade and industry.

While Japan was undergoing the industrial revolution like England in the latter part of the 18th century, the life of these girls was considered as a life of tragedy, and the tragedy of the working girls was looked upon as an inevitable attendant evil of the factory system. The life of a factory girl, the *Joko*, is epitomized in a Japanese ballad of which the following is a free translation :

"With sleepy eyes she goes to work
at five in the morning,
With lunch bag in her hand,—
a pathetic sight.
The bloom of her youth
she spends in dust,
And at night she sleeps
like a dead little figure."

The sight, however, did not ultimately

appear to be so much pathetic to the girls themselves as it appeared to the sentimental poet, for the number of girl labourers had a steady increase, resulting in the unemployment of male labour in most of the fields.

A survey made by the Central Employment Agencies reveals that the ages of these working girls range from 15 to 28. About 92 per cent of them are unmarried, only 2 per cent married, 2 per cent either widows or divorced women, and the remainder unknown.

When asked the reason why they chose this occupation, 30 per cent of the girls covered by the survey said, they wanted to help support their families ; 10 per cent said that they wanted to save something in preparation for their marriage ; 12 per cent in order to earn their living ; 13 per cent to gain business experience so that they might be able to start their own business or help their husbands when married ; 12 per cent, because they simply wanted to work and the remainder for unknown reasons.

The dormitories attached to the factories are often made the butt of attack by

interested social workers and proletarian leaders. But not all the girls live in the dormitories. Many go to their homes and, to be sure, most of the mills have put up 'model dormitories' for their employees. Food and sleeping accomodation are good, sanitary conditions excellent, and there are tennis courts, gymnasium, cinema hall, study circle and libraries installed within the factory compound for the physical and spiritual uplift of the men and women, for which purpose priests and educators are often invited to give lectures.

We had the privilege to go round the workers' quarters in several mills and factories, and we envied the workers for the scrupulously clean Japanese style rooms they lived in, which though freed from the luxury of furnitures as the Japanese houses generally are, appeared to us to be a better place to live in than the average houses of well-to-do people in our country.

Western industrialists, unable to compete with Japanese products, often accuse her of sweated labour. But, the standard of living of labourers in Japan is by no means inferior to that of the labourers of any other country

in the world. In considering the competitive capacity of the Japanese goods in world markets, one should not overlook the important factor of the family system of Japan, which makes up for any defects in the legal and social protection of labourers.

This family system, a peculiar circumstance hardly paralleled in any other country in the world, began with the history of the race and is still a powerful basic factor in the daily life of the Japanese. Not only in spiritual culture, but in economic development, the family or the tribe always constitutes the unit. The Westernization of Japanese society has in no way destroyed the family system which has been the foundation of the Japanese society for over three thousand years. The new economic system founded on liberalism or individualism has been skilfully harmonized with the old family system and there has been created a peculiar mode of life.

Since the World War, the economic system of Japan has rapidly developed into the most extreme form of capitalism. The daily life of labourers is, however, still controlled by the idea of the family unit;

their incomes and expenses are treated as problems of the family as a whole. The labourer puts his or her wages into the pooled income of the family and gets his or her proper share with other members of the family. This system enables many workmen to work in factories for wages below the ordinary level, and if they cannot keep up themselves independently, can do so in common with the other members of the family. It is, therefore, erroneous to judge the standard of living of Japanese labourers by the wages they get.

The main rules of the Japanese Factory Law provide the outlines and the sub-rules stipulate details, the most important of which are as follows :

The maximum working hours are 11 hours a day. Night labour between 10 p.m. and 5 a.m. is prohibited. Recess of half an hour or an hour a day. Strict supervision of sanitary equipment by local authorities. The granting of allowances in case of injury, sickness, death etc. When an employee cannot draw regular wages because of injury or sickness, he gets 60 per cent of his former wages. He is entitled to receive wages for

from 40 to 54 days according to the degree of the injury or sickness.

The arrangements made by capitalists for the furtherance of the welfare of their employees from philanthropic motives were taken into consideration in the promulgation of the Factory Law. There are health insurance co-operative organizations and Government Health Insurance for the workers and maternity benefit for the women employees. The welfare work includes cultural, economic and sanitation work. Most of the big factories are equipped with schools of intermediate grade, whereas the medium and small sized factories which cannot conduct schools entrust the education of their employees to schools situated near the factories. All the expenses connected with the education of employees are defrayed by the employers. There are arrangements for sports and in the factories where a large number of girls are employed, flower arrangement, tea ceremony, sewing, cooking, etc. are taught as necessary accomplishments for housewives.

The present industrial ascendancy of Japan is not an accident; at the back of it

selective processes have been at work, whereby the country assimilated the good and eschewed the bad features of the Western industrial system and at the same time carefully conserved such of these old institutions as would contribute to industrial efficiency and concord.

The expansion of Japan's export trade has been the world's wonder and many of our friends have often accused Japan of 'social dumping'. The falsity of this allegation lies mainly in the circumstances of the comparative novelty of Japan's industrial activity, the high degree rationalization in Japanese industry and the superior craftsmanship and managerial capacity of the Japanese. There are other reasons, such as Japan's proximity to foreign markets with promises of future developments and the other geographical advantages, the growing diversity of Japanese export merchandise, the increasing activity of the Japanese in acquiring information regarding foreign markets and the fact that most Japanese manufactures are of a kind directly meeting the requirements of the masses.

The remarkable advance of the Japanese overseas trade is based on two reasons, one permanent or fundamental, and the other temporary or circumstantial. The former is based on such factors as patience, effort, sincerity and all the other virtues peculiar to the Japanese race, the power of gaining technique, the simple and plain way of living, low wages, rationalization of industrial organization, increase of efficiency and so forth, and the latter on such factors as the slump of the Yen, and the decrease in costs caused by the new establishments and expansion of business. It may be said that the latter factors are, however, now losing ground, because of the international stabilization of currencies, the fact that labour power has reached its limit and the gradual deepening of anxiety because of over production.

It has recently become fashionable to condemn Japan on all counts; but our present prejudices should not blind us to the permanent character of some of the achievements of this great Asiatic power which started its career with all the

handicaps of medievalism in politics and economics common to all other Asiatic nations and yet, within half a century, came to be one of the great powers of the world.

Despite inevitable antagonism between capital and labour, class interests have been consciously subordinated by both parties to the industrial advancement of the country as a whole, and this furnishes a marked contrast to the progressive embitterment of employer relationships in India and should furnish a wholesome object-lesson to those responsible for the recent plethora of strikes and lockouts, particularly in the textile industry. The Indian industrialists might rise themselves above mere passive grumbling against Japanese 'dumping', crying for protection in season and out of season, and try to improve the conditions of Indian capital and labour as well as the techniques of production and distribution so as to demonstrate the capacity of India to face Japan as equal.

POLITICS

The Japanese constitution is a plant of the nineteenth century liberalism grafted on one of the unshakable foundations of the Japanese life—the Mikado or the Emperor cult. The Emperor is regarded as the Son of Heaven and absolute fountain of all authority. "The Imperial dynasty is, according to the Japanese expression, coeval with heaven and earth. There are no Stuarts, no Plantagenets in Japan as you find them in English history, nor Tang, Sung and Tsin dynastics as in Chinese history". Due to this unbroken descent and the traditions and religious sacredness of the Emperor, the Mikado's powers are original, unlimited or self-limited.

Opinions vary about the nature, type and character of the constitution. Most of the foreigners have branded it as characteristic of oriental despotism, while almost every Japanese regards it as one of the finest and most unique of state papers yet extant. Though it is a gift from the throne, "a gift granted to the subjects by the Imperial

House", in reality an ordinance, uniliteral in origin, devised without the assent or consent of the governed, it is irrevocable, unlike the post-Napoleonic legitimism.

Though the Japanese constitution is a written one in the main containing only seventysix articles, there are numerous constitutional conventions, which have preserved its organic and vital character. The very general character of the constitution, intentionally leaving out question of administrative, legislative and judicial details to be treated by ordinary legislations, has enhanced its dignity and value. In fact, its very brevity has increased its elasticity. "The fact that the Japanese constitution has been practically unamended during twenty-six years of its life, is attributed both to the ability of those who drafted it and to the political genius of the people who are governed by it".

The Emperor is the fountain head of executive, legislative and judicial powers, but that does not mean that he is autocratic. The Emperor exercises various powers with the assistance and advice of the Ministers of State, the *Genro* or Elder Statesmen,

the Privy Council and the Grand Keeper of the Imperial Seals. The Emperor of Japan exercises in theory a more substantial amount of real power than the King of England, who enjoys a residuary power which the law allows to the Crown.

The *Genro* and the Imperial Household Ministry are two extra-constitutional bodies, which wield considerable influence over the administration. Of all the constitutional bodies that advise the Emperor, the Privy Council is the highest, though its opinion may be accepted or rejected by the Emperor. Important state matters such as interpretation of constitution, proclamation of martial law, Imperial ordinances, treaties and international pledges, and all other matters referred to by the Emperor, are discussed by it, but the influence of the Privy Council upon the actual administration is almost nil, though it claims the right of veto.

Though the Emperor had theoretically all powers centered in him, yet in actual practice it was exercised in his name and on his behalf by various important clansmen and feudal chiefs. "A study of Japanese history shows, however, that the Mikado

has rarely exercised much of his power in practice. Almost always has it been wielded in his name, often sorely against his will, by the members of some ambitious house which has managed to possess itself of supreme influence over the affairs of the state".

This ultimately gave rise to a movement against feudalism, in which the feudal warriors of the *samurai*, supported by their lords, took the most prominent part. The peculiarity of the Japanese constitutional movement lies in the fact that it had been promoted solely by petitions issued principally by the *ex-samurai*, and not due to a democratic revolution of the bourgeoisie.

The new parliamentary Government, for a short time immediately after its establishment, when the antedated mechanism of feudalism decisively proved its own impotency in saving the new situation, could not re-orient its course abruptly in the direction of constitutional Government. It was obliged to devise various makeshift measures and put them into practice as transitional experiments.

The first draft of constitutional monarchy

and a bicameral parliamentarism was not approved by the ministers, on the ground that it granted, as in the British constitution, too many powers to the parliament. So, in February 1889, on the Empire Foundation Day, the new constitution was promulgated, and absolute sovereignty forms the pivot on which the constitution is based and every care has been taken not to neglect it. In the countries of Europe the constitutionalism is more than ten centuries old and the people are provided with a religion which has served as a mental pivot to the operation of the system. A democratic system of government without a pivot is most likely not to succeed. In Japan, where no religion has so much influence upon the people's mind, the pivot was found in the Imperial Family. "It is, therefore entirely different in nature from the European constitutions, which have been instituted either on the basis of divided sovereignty or in accordance with the principle of condominium."

The constitution of Japan shows that it was greatly influenced by the German constitution of the time of Bismarck, but the movement and development of political

parties, with minor exceptions, have been rather dominated by the British idea of the two party system as their standard as well as their object. The fundamental principle of the constitution has been rather democratic, as the Emperor is anxious to see that the representatives of the people should express their approval or disapprobation of Governmental measures, and the executive should try its best to abide by their will and expressed opinion. The Japanese executive is not responsible to the Diet in the same sense as the English Cabinet is to the House of Commons. Its power over Finance and to issue ordinances is very extensive. Necessarily, the legislature in Japan appears to be rather an unimportant organ whose powers can at most be critical, debatory and consultative.

In the Cabinet Organization Ordinance, it has been declared that the function of the Prime Minister is to preserve unity among the State Ministers. Thus, the powers of the Prime Minister and the theory of joint responsibility, both are rapidly growing, and the practice of appointing the leader of the Majority Party as the Prime Minister is being followed in Japan.

The most important organ of the Japanese executive is the Cabinet, which is composed of the Prime Minister, and thirteen other State Ministers who hold different portfolios. The Ministers are directly responsible to the Emperor and indirectly to the people. The Japanese Cabinet, like the English analogue, is rather a hyphen that links the crown with the legislature and therefore with the people. It is a body of Ministers of the Executive and not of the Legislature. Its function is to prepare, initiate, and urge for acceptance by the Diet of measures and legislations of national importance. It directs the performance of day to day administrative works. In theory, it is responsible to the Emperor only, but in practice it is dependent upon the voice of the people in the Diet.

The Diet is composed of two Houses: the House of Peers and the House of Representatives. Both Houses have equal powers, but money bills are first presented before the Lower House. No House can proceed with any work unless it has been invoked by the Emperor, who can open, close, or dissolve the Diet.

The House of Peers contains 150 elected Peers and 199 representatives of statesmen, scholars, scientists, and wealthy business-men and a certain number of Imperial princes and Marquises, whose number cannot be fixed on account of the nature of their status. But, as these ranks can be and are attained by men of ordinary birth and as it was ordinanced that their number would be equal to the number of the untitled members, the Japanese House of Peers is more representative and democratic than the English House of Lords.

The House of Representatives is constituted on the basis of the Electoral Law, which has been revised many times in accordance with the development of democratic ideas in Japan. The latest revision has provided for universal suffrage. All male subjects of or over 25 years of age, with some necessary exceptions, are entitled to vote, which is done by secret ballots, and a candidate must be 20 years of age or over. When a House is dissolved, the new House shall be convoked within five months, which guarantees the continued existence of the House. Women are not entitled to vote.

"The bureaucracy working hand in glove with the House of Peers, the political and legal character of the Lower House is not very strong. The multiplicity of views and absence of general agreement among its members have prevented it from standing to the forefront of Japanese politics."

The number of the House is at present 466 while the number of voters in 1937 was 13,938,456. The Parliamentary Government passed through a long stage of development, first, under the control of Elder Statesmen and bureaucrats and later, under the co-operation of bureaucrats and politicel parties. The political field today is mainly divided into two main parties, namely the *Seiyukai* and *Minseito*.

The position of the *Seiyukai*, if we seek a comparison abroad, may be described as akin to the Conservatives in England, and more like the Republican than the Democratic party in America. It upholds the policy of befriending landowners and of protective tariff at home, and calls itself more 'positive' than the *Minseito* in its foreign policy. The leading figures in

business circles may be taken as indicating the real nature of the *Seiyukai*.

The *Minseito*, which is the only formidable opponent of the *Seiyukai*, may be said to occupy a similar position as the Liberals in England, but about the same as the Labour Party from the point of party strength, or as the Democratic Party in America.

In maintaining close relations with the capitalist class, the *Minseito* stands in about the same position as the *Seiyukai*, but while the *Seiyukai* counts among its supporters the landowner class throughout the country, the *Minseito* rather relies on the support of the industrial and commercial class. In contra-distinction to the *Seiyukai* emphasizing its 'positive' policy in its finance and economic policies, the *Minseito* calls for a retrenchment policy. Whereas the *Seiyukai* insists on carrying out its so-called positive policy even by issuing loans and increasing the national burden, the *Minseito* declares for an entirely opposite policy, declaring that by financial retrenchment the general financial circles must be restored to a healthy condition. In the railway policy, and railways are state-owned in Japan, the

Seiyukai devotes its energy more to constructing new lines and less to repairing, but the *Minseito* adheres to its traditional policy of improvement first, and is less interested in building new lines.

The emphasis laid by the *Minseito* on a freer trade, had clearly marked the respective positions of these two major parties on the tariff policy, as the *Seiyukai* wanted to maintain a high tariff wall.

The most remarkable difference between the two major parties is visible in their foreign policy. Against the *Seiyukai's* positive policy, the *Minseito* insists on the 'Shidehara diplomacy' based on non-interference. This policy has always met with opposition from those advocating extreme imperialism or those who cannot maintain their profits except under the protective wings of paternalism, but the liberal minded and public opinion in general supported this 'Shidehara diplomacy' to a man, and so far as China is concerned, they insisted on letting the Chinese work out their own salvation.

At the first general election after the general suffrage was introduced, there

appeared the new Labour Party, as a party of the labouring class, with strength of approximately four per cent of the total votes cast. The Government had suspicious eyes on any labour movement or pôlitical campaign by organised labour, which was subjected to almost intolerable election interferences, but the result was not so discouraging as compared with the early stage of the political struggles of the British Labour Party. The drawback of the Labour Party was its not being a unified, single group, but composed of various elements. Especially between the two sections of Right and Left, there was an insurmountable barrier in their political views, with communism as the extreme boundary line.

There are, of course Neutrals, for casting votes in the true sense of the term and they sometimes wield unprecedented influence. The party politics of Japan is thus subjected to the whims of a few non-partisan politicians, who are neither black nor white in their attitude towards State problems. But general cultural progress and the application of manhood suffrage have stimulated the nation's interest in

State politics and helped it to judge political issues with clearness and conviction.

Political demands by the nation at large have markedly become much more liberal. The parties are not slow to notice this tendency and are trying to conciliate this liberalism. The fact that both *Seiyukai* and *Minseito* are competing with each other in adopting liberal policies is chiefly due to the rise of the Labour Party. Among the planks declared on the Labour platform, there are some that merit hearty support from all the nation, especially the intellectual class and the labouring class that understand well the complications of the social life of today. Politicians have come to recognize that no political party can exist if it ignores these salient facts.

It is important to remark, however, that incurable corruption undermined the parties when they were at the zenith of their glory. This prejudiced the public so unfavourably against them that little sympathy could be expected from it when bureaucracy came to prevail again in the Cabinet organization. There was a time when political parties took the lead in arena of politics according

to the party cabinet system. Then came the dramatic shift of scene, in which the political parties were supplanted by new bureaucrats, a horizontal league organised by officials, who had hitherto been under oppression unjustly imposed upon them by party politicians, but who, at this juncture, rose in revolt against the old power to realize the ideals they entertained.

Under the Party Government system the holder of the premiership is the president of a party. Conversely, the president of a party always faces the possibility of some day becoming premier. The system was suspended owing to the changed conditions brought about by the Manchurian incident· and other factors, and the likelihood of the president of a party becoming premier had been lessened to a great extent. The *Seiyukai* and the *Minseito* parties started a movement for co-operation between themselves to bring about the restoration of the Party Govenment system, but the agreement to work together, however, was ephemeral and on the question of agrarian relief, the co-operation between the two parties

soon came to an end with no prospect of revival in near future.

There has appeared, most recently, the Whole Nation Cabinet, which advocates 'universal affinity' in response to the present emergency which has been instigated by Sino-Japanese conflict.

"The basic policy of the Japanese Government", as pronounced by the Foreign Minister on September 5, 1937, "aims at the stabilization of Eastern Asia through conciliation and co-operation between Japan, Manchoukuo and China for their common prosperity and well-being". "Let us hope", he proceeds, "that the statesmen of China will be brought to take a broad view of Eastern Asia, that they will speedily realise their mistakes and act in unison with the high aims and aspirations of Japan."

There are people who might view these solemnities as so much humbug, but they do not realize that every nation has its favourite brand of political narcotic, and what is distasteful to one may be swallowed readily by another. Many people may rub their eyes with wonder when they hear a Japanese statesman asserting to be friends

with China at a moment when Chinese towns are being bombed and battered to destruction. But it is true that the Japanese have no monopoly of silly political phrases, for the world to-day reverberates with them. It might even be said of Japanese statements of policy that they spring from a praiseworthy desire to explain Japanese actions in terminology which has become fashionable under the influence of the League of Nations. Such phrases as "stabilization" are tokens from the same mint as "collective security."

To those who are familiar with Oriental history there is an almost classical flavour in the pronouncements of Japanese statesmen today. In them we seem to hear echoes of recorded utterances of the great men of Oriental antiquity. In Indian legends we find wars for the establishment of *Dharma Rajya* or the Reign of Righteousness in different ages by different incarnations of the God. The war of Kurukshetra in which all the country from Gandhara (Peshwar) to Bengal was involved had a very devastating consequence. And, that devastation was wrought out by no less a personage than

Sreē Krishna, who saw even the people of his own family, degenerated as they were, killing themselves in a civil war. In ancient Chinese chronicles we find wars of conquest politely described as excursions to spread righteousness among ignorant peoples or to bring barbarians under the influence of a benigner culture. Such hyperbole is, of course, rather irritating if one is not familiar with the vocabulary ; but it must be looked upon as what the speaker believes. A resort to euphemism does not by itself prove that a speaker has a bad case.

When President Wilson ruled out the Japanese proposal to insert a racial equality clause in the League Covenant, he laid the foundation of a resentment, which, intensified by the Exclusion Act of 1924, has been one of the main factors in consolidating Japanese policy. It seems to be the sad truth that the blow to Japan's pride and the check to her aspirations caused by the restrictions of the Nine-power Treaty following upon the failure in the racial equality issue, were important factors in producing the intensive phase in both domestic and foreign affairs, which opened

with the Manchurian incident in 1931. The League's condemnation of Japan in 1932 did nothing but strengthen the forces of nationalism, as since that date such liberalism or internationalism as existed in Japan has gone to ground. Japan's struggle to free herself from restraints imposed upon her by Western Powers dates back at least to the days of the unequal treaties and no reading of present policy is correct that does not take this fact into account. It ill becomes Western critics to take a high moral tone with Eastern peoples on the point of territorial acquisition. The Treaty of Versailles is too near in time to permit us to argue that we are now either repentant or reformed.

The natural desire of a vigorous and self-confident nation for expansion combines with fear of a new and reorganized China to put Japan in a position very similar to that of Germany in 1914. There is the same energy, the same industrial growth, the same search for trade outlets. It does not matter whether those fears are real or imagined, so long as they are operative; and their result is to over-ride all scruples

that might otherwise be felt as to the legitimacy of an agressive policy.

It may be true that no other power has attempted or even desired to check Japan's legitimate aspirations since the Sino-Japanese War in 1895, but it is equally true that their policies have nevertheless acted in restraint of Japanese expansion, and we must not blind ourselves to the fact that what Japan desires to-day is no longer parity but superiority, at least in Eastern Asia. They are debarred from expansion in all directions by restraints upon their immigrants and their exports. In China alone is there room for their development: an immense country, now backward but capable of great development, if only they can persuade the Chinese to make common cause with them. To the Japanese this is so obvious and so reasonable and the plan presents such evident advantages that from thinking it expedient they have come to think it necessary, and from thinking it necessary for Japan they have come to think it desirable for China as well.

Nations, like individuals, are given thus to rationalizing their wishes. The Japanese

do honestly feel that, given the opportunity, they would contribute, to use their own phrase, to "the peace of the world and stabilization of Eastern Asia."

Each rejection of a peaceful overture, each rebuff that Japan receives in China, each failure to submit to pressure, merely angers the Japanese and urges them on to still more drastic course. Japan has pursued two policies in China in the last ten years. The Shidehara policy sought China's friendship by patience and conciliation. It was too slow for the impatient spirit of young Japan, and since 1931 Japan employed bold politics. The end has not yet justified the means, the means have altered the end.

This alteration of methods, this swing from persuasion to coercion, is perhaps due in a large measure to strains in domestic politics. The forward elements in Japan wished to break out of this position of deadlock and the most extreme among them felt it necessary to remove opposition by physically eliminating their opponents. Since the assassination of Inukai in 1932 a process of purging has continued, sometimes

by simple pressure, sometimes by violence. The military elements became more and more dominant in the Cabinet, leaving little but a semblance of party rules.

The brief analysis of political trend is misleading if it gives the impression that Japan has recently passed through a political crisis. There is no cleavage in Japan between two strongly opposed camps of extremists and moderates and it is best to assume that effective opinion in Japan is united over the main objectives of Japanese policy, though it may be divided over the methods that it would adopt. There may be differences of judgement as to the appropriate speed and routes but nobody questions the destination. It is only a gradation from what in England would be called old-fashioned liberalism to an ultra-nationalism of fascist type. But, as we have said before, political groupings in Japan cannot be accurately described by Western labels.

Military spirit in Japan has become almost proverbial and the semi-independence of the Minister of War and Navy, has created many acute constitutional and political problems, which are not very easy

of solution. The Army exercises its power by laying down general principles not ouly as regards foreign affairs, but also on finance, social problems, and even constitutional issues.

In studying Japanese constitution one must not forget that literacy in Japan is exceptionally high, that political opinions are expressed in the country without being gagged by the State and that in view of the acute economic and populational problems of Japan, she requires more space and better treatment from those who are vociferous enough to speak of justice, but sensitively alert when their interests are at stake in administering the justice. Russia can speak of communism while enjoying almost half the globe, a large area rich in all sorts of resources ; China can preach socialism here and there in her vast continent lulled on the laps of assiduous well-wishers, but Germany requires her colonies, and so does Italy, and as recent events indicate, even Communist Russia does not think annexation altogether undesirable if that can be achieved in a process of peaceful penetration. So, there appears no chance of applying the

principles of communal communism to the community of nations and of allowing equal breathing space to all.

There are some great thinkers and political writers who foresee in Japan a tremendous revolution in the conception of political liberty, and some of them are jubillant on the possibility of the success of communism in Japan. But they forget that the tremendous elasticity for application and adaptability to the changing circumstances of the Japanese Constitution is sufficient guarantee for any eventuality that might arise.

There are as many as twelve political parties in Japan at present, all striving their best to promote individual freedom and economic salvation of the people. The *Seiyukai*, the *Minseito*, the Labour and Farmer's Party, the Social Democrats and the National Patriotic Party, some drawing inspiration from Moscow, others following the spirit of the Western Conservative, Liberal and Socialist ideas. They are not unaware of the metaphysical ideology of Hegel or of the communism of Marx; they know the contractual

speculators like Locke and the utilitarians like Bentham ; but the super-rationalism of their constitution persists. It is out of accord with the nineteenth century rationalism or twentieth century positivism.

This is Japanese national psychology, and one thing stands beyond doubt that Bolshevism in Japan is unthinkable, as Japanese conception of liberty is singularly communal and not individual. They realize that the race is more important than class and their nationalism is based on the family system, on the idea that the State is a huge family and the Emperor, the father. They refuse to part with their original native character, their ancient traditions, their age-old institutions and their Mikado.